



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

W. L. M. C. 27
2744



THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN:

DESIGNED TO ADVOCATE

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,

AND THE

RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT,

IN

MATTERS OF FAITH.

To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and
one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.—1 Cor. viii. 6.

VOLUME VI.—THIRD SERIES.

BELFAST:

PRINTED BY SIMMS AND M'INTYRE.

PUBLISHED AT THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN OFFICE,

No. 28, Rosemary-Street.

SOLD BY GREEN, NEWRY; DUGAN, BALLYMENA;
BRADFORD, CORK; J. MARDON, 7, FARRINGTON-STREET, LONDON.

1844.



INDEX.

	Page
Aberdeen, Soiree at	105
American Unitarian Association	284, 313
Ballycarry, Soiree at	363
Banbridge Meeting-house, Opening of	391
Barker, Joseph	284
Belfast Unitarian Society	98, 389
Bishop, Testimonial to Rev. F.	319
Bolton Unitarian Association	387
British and Foreign Unitarian Association	247
Bury and Stand Sunday-school Festival... ..	283
Capital Punishment	206
Channing, Dr. Sketch of, by Dr. Dewey	225
Children, A Leaf for ... 27, 55, 101, 168, 207, 244, 274, 311, 343, 384, ...	416
Christ, The Name of	269
Christianity	380
Christianity? What is	253
Christmas Day	415
Church, An Appeal to the	306
Church, The Doctrines of Our	37
Continental Intelligence	107
Deaf and Dumb, and the Blind, Institution for	70
Dissenters' Chapels Bill 215, 217, 250, 288, ...	293
Dissenters' Chapels Act, Copy of	312
Domestic Mission, Birmingham	171, 427
London	212, 424
Domestic Worship	159
Drummond, Dr. on Martyrdom of Servetus	429
Dunmurry, Soiree at	431
Edgar, Dr. and Rev. J. S. Porter, Correspondence of	71
Edgar, Dr. Mr. Shannon's Letter to	103
Eighteen Hundred and Forty-Four	2
Faith? What Shall We Do to Extend Our... ..	289
Fulfilled Desire, The Burden of	401
Glenarm, Soiree at	431
Hollywood, Soiree at	362
Humble Life, Poetry of	84
Indian, A North American, on Civilized Practices	47
Intemperate, The Wife of the	117
Irish Unitarian Christian Society	350
Keys of the Kingdom	145
Kindness, the Power of	165
Late Hour System	91
Marriage Act, The New	321
Marriage Question, The	142, 179
Mathew, Father	398, 432
M'Adam, Mr. George, Testimonial to	104
Ministry at Large, United States	386
Missionary Fund, United States	387

	Page
Moneyrea, Soiree at	323
Montgomery, Rev. Dr. Public Dinner to	392
Montgomery, Rev. J. K. Presentation to	208
Montreal, Unitarian Society at 34, 35, 143,	360
Newry, Tea Party at	322
Non-Subscribing Association, Meeting of	316
Obituary 72, 108, 144, 180, 252,	282
Past, Present, and Future, The	5
Penn, William, Life and Character of	329, 365
Personal Holiness, Thoughts on	113
Plain Letter on An Important Subject	240
Poetry 26, 27, 52, 100, 128, 166, 204, 243,	381
Prayer, The House of	109
Preaching, Alleged Defects of Unitarian	371, 405
Providence, Rhode Island, Convention at	68
Reform, Evangelical, in the North of England	69
Religious Conversation Society, Belfast	23, 96, 245
Religious Instruction in European Schools	161
Remonstrant Synod, Meeting of	316
Responsibility, Christian	115
REVIEW.—A Voice from the Vintage. By Mrs. Ellis	29
Wisdom is the Principal Thing. By Dr. Montgomery	32
The Little Magazine	32
The Truth Divested of Mystery. By Philalethes	63
Religious Union. By Rev. John Taylor	130
Sunday-school Rhymes and Other Metrical Pieces	132
The Anniversary of the Lord's Supper. By H. Hawkes	170
Family Prayers. By Benjamin Carpenter	170
The Juvenile Miscellany of Facts and Fiction	171
Three Arguments Considered. By Rev. Classon Porter	280
Popular Objections Against Unitarianism	282
Catechism of the Life of Christ	282
Livermore's Commentary on the Four Gospels	420
Sabbath Made for Man	340
Sabbath, The Christian	73
Slavery, American, English Address on 33, 212,	421
Slavery and Anti-Slavery Agitation 122, 186,	233
Strangeways, Manchester, Unitarian Chapel at	105
Sunday-school Association, London	249
Sunday-school Association, Northern 125, 143,	214
Sunday-school Celebration at Bridgewater, U. S.	423
Sunday School, The	190
Sunday School, Extended Instruction in the	195
Sunday Schools, Mossley-street, Manchester	174
Sunday School, Simple Thoughts on the	11
Sunday-school Society, Boston	346
Sunday School, York-street, Belfast	72
Tavistock, Tea party at	388
Teachers' Social Union, Boston, U. S.	176, 209
Templepatrick, Soiree at	323
Total Abstinence 44, 78, 272,	375
Unitarian Christianity, Nature and Tendency of	181
Unitarian Property, Proceedings against	133, 175
Ware, Dr. Henry, Life and Writings of	18, 49

THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. I.

JANUARY, 1844.

VOL. VI.

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPH.

IN resuming the Editorship of the *Bible Christian*, I am fully conscious that I undertake a work of some labour, and much responsibility; but I calculate, with confidence, on the aid of brethren, whose valuable contributions will lighten my labour, and whose judicious advice will lessen a responsibility, from which I would otherwise shrink.

I hold, in common with some others, a deep conviction of the necessity of continuing a periodical devoted to the interests of Liberal Christianity. Other churches around us have newspapers and periodicals to advocate their views, and it is right that our own, though less numerous and less wealthy, should have some publication to plead her cause, and vindicate her opinions. I do not forget the honourable and generous part which, in other days, the *Northern Whig* performed in aiding the struggles of our church for *Religious Liberty*—a part which, we presume, that journal would still be ready to take—but beyond that, it would be unreasonable, as we know it would be vain to expect, that the *Whig*, or any other paper conducted on similar principles, would go; and, for the explanation and defence of our views, such a publication as the *Bible Christian* is indispensable.

And when we consider the awakening spirit of religion within our borders, as evidenced by an interest in the Sunday School and other Christian institutions, we must feel that the press may greatly aid in fostering and spreading that spirit amongst us.

I trust I shall be enabled, by the co-operation of others, to continue the interest which the *Bible Christian* has hitherto possessed; and if it be not sustained by the countenance and support of the people, we must only lament their want of sympathy in the struggles and labours of our Zion.

C. J. M.

Holywood, Dec. 1843.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR.

ANOTHER year has glided silently and swiftly by, and brought us to eighteen hundred and forty-four. Eighteen hundred and forty-three years, according to the common, and not, perhaps, very erroneous chronology, since over the plains of Bethlehem, the angels announced the birth of the Messiah, and proclaimed peace on earth, and good-will towards men. And yet how little, through the progress of those centuries, has Peace prevailed, even in those lands that are nominally Christian. This precious fruit of the spirit did indeed animate the hearts of the early disciples—the hearts of those who held converse with the Son of God, and felt the heavenly influence which his presence threw around it:—the Christian and the soldier had no affinity then, love broke down all the sterner features of character, and the cross was to them the expressive and touching sign of charity, forgiveness, and self-sacrifice. But soon, alas! this foundation principle of the gospel was lost amid earthly passions and selfish pursuits; and the history of the church through the dreary ages that have intervened, is the history of usurpation, conflicts, and bloodshed,—a region of darkness, with but here and there a streak of light—some devout spirit, some fearless reformer, some martyred worthy, to tell us of the Sun of righteousness struggling to penetrate the thick cloud of human passions and sins which have enshrouded it. Yet, melancholy as is the retrospect, there are symptoms of better times. We enter on another year, bearing with us the lessons of Christian peace which Noah Worcester and other good men have bequeathed to us; these lessons are beginning to be heard where before they were ridiculed. Men are opening their hearts as well as their eyes to contemplate the horrors of War; and if we act in our humble sphere a faithful part, we may help to bring round that happy period when civilized nations shall decide their differences, not by fire and sword, but by a peaceful congress. Then will the angelic song have found an echo in Christian lands, and the Prince of Peace will have gained at least a partial triumph upon earth.

More than eighteen centuries have rolled past since the angels sang “good-will towards men”—since the Son of God exhibited in life and death an unextinguishable love

for the world, and laid upon his disciples the duty of loving one another. Yet, what has been the history of those centuries but a history of strife, anger, hatred, and persecution? Dwell on the life and the gospel of the Saviour, mark the love and self-denial that stand prominently out as their peculiar characteristic, and then turn to society as it is presented to us now, or as it appears in the records of the past; and feel that Christianity has not impressed its image on those who profess it, nor transformed men into the likeness of him whom they acknowledge as their Master. But let us not doubt the efficacy of that glorious gospel, if its influences have been so small. We doubt not the brightness and the power of the sun, though the mists of morning may obscure it to our view; and though so many centuries have passed on, this surely is but the morning of the gospel kingdom. They must egregiously misunderstand prophecy, who would tell us that the end of all things is at hand. The spirit of love has not yet penetrated the selfishness of man, and quickened into vigorous life the benevolence and self-sacrifice of his heart. But symptoms there are of that benevolence being awakened, and that self-sacrifice exercised. What are the humane institutions of our land, but the results of this spirit? What is the life of a Howard, but an exhibition of its power? We should be thankful that it has operated even partially. Our faith in its final, though tardy, triumph should be strengthened, and our effort and prayer should be, that we may be imbued with more of its heavenly influence.

How many centuries have passed since in the synagogue of Nazareth the Son of God stood forth and proclaimed "liberty to the captive." And yet, since that period, how often has his name been desecrated by a union with tyranny and usurpation; how often, under that name, has liberty been violated, the thoughts fettered, conscience trampled upon, and dungeons filled with the victims of oppression! Did not Christian nations institute the slave-trade, from which but lately England has freed herself, and which is still a burning disgrace on America? Christianity, though eighteen hundred years old, is but in its infancy; the spirit of Wilberforce and Clarkson, caught from the book of God, is but a first fruit of that spirit which is now growing apace, and which shall spread and operate over

society, over the world. And the spirit of Wickliffe and Zuingle, Emlyn and Lindsey, is but the first fruits of that spirit of religious liberty, which, checked and stifled though it be for a time, is destined to triumph over every power that would repress and crush it.

How many years since the Saviour of the world, standing by the well in Samaria, declared that "the hour cometh, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth"—since his disciples asked for instruction in prayer, and he taught them to pray, saying, "Our Father who art in heaven!" And yet in the multitude of churches that fill this and other lands, men have for ages worshipped, and do still worship the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God. Strange it must appear to the reflecting mind, that there is so little harmony between the teachings of Christ and the practices of Christians; and stranger still, that those who contend for the worship of the one God, the Father, should be scorned, derided, and insulted; shunned as those whose society is contagion, and unsparingly doomed, by professing followers of the meek and gentle Saviour, to everlasting perdition. How consolatory for "the true worshippers" to turn from the scorn and calumny of the world to the gospel of Jesus,—how strengthening to our faith to sit at his feet and to hear his word, how delightful to contemplate the progress of truth, and look forward in faith to the period when that Sun, which is now struggling through the clouds of ignorance and evil, shall have reached his meridian height, and shall pour down his cheering beams upon the world, clearing up all doubt, and dissipating all sin.

In the advancement of peace, freedom, and truth, all have "a charge to keep"—a duty to fulfil; and well will it be for us, if now, when time pauses as it were for a moment, and gives us a breathing space before we start on another year—well were it for us if we would consider how we have promoted peace, aided freedom, and served truth, in the years that are gone! There is no one so humble that he is freed from responsibility. The mightiest influences of nature, if analyzed, may be found to consist of small and seemingly inconsiderable parts. The shower that revives the drooping plants is but so many tiny drops, each insignificant, yet tending to make up that which

is unspeakably precious. Precious too are the labours, sacrifices, and prayers of the humblest in the cause of Christ and of God; and while there are the many powerful instruments of civilization at work to promote the kingdom of Heaven, and first of all these, the press, which multiplies indefinitely the Word of God; yet every one can aid in its silent advancement. Happy will it be for you, reader, and for me, if, when this year is completed, and other years which God may add to our earthly probation, we shall be able to say, with an approving conscience, "We have done what we could."

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

THE commencement of another year leads us to review the progress we have made, to survey our present situation, and to contemplate our future prospects. It is too much the custom, I fear, of many Unitarians of the present day, because the success of our principles is not commensurate with their wishes, to survey the past with regret, and to speak of the present and future too despondingly. And of this feeling some of our opponents have not been backward to avail themselves, representing Unitarianism as a cold, inoperative, and even repulsive faith; and labouring assiduously to persuade the public, that "the Arian heresy," as they are pleased to term it, is "waxing small by degrees, and beautifully less."

It must be confessed, that were we to measure the success of our principles by their superior accordance with Scripture and reason, their superior simplicity, high moral tendency, and applicability to the unlettered and the poor, we would have too much room for regret and despondency, as their success has certainly not been commensurate with these characteristic qualities of Gospel truth. But this certainly would be a very erroneous criterion, though it is the one that our friends, in general, assume. In what age or country, let me ask, has either the superior simplicity or moral tendency of any doctrine recommended it to the favourable notice of the multitude? The ignorant are ever inclined to superstition and mysticism; they are proverbially prone to believe what they cannot understand.

That a doctrine accords with reason, and is plain, simple, and intelligible, is, to many minds, the strongest reason for its rejection. That it should best accord with Scripture is a matter of slight consideration; for most persons contrive to find in the Scriptures precisely what they want to find in them. And as to its superior moral tendency, this is precisely another of the strongest obstacles to its general diffusion. The bulk of mankind would much rather be saved without morality. Conscious of their own backslidings, and indisposed to amend, that doctrine will have the most favour with them which demands the least exertion. In olden times, there were those who "said unto the seers, see not; and to the prophets, prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits." The author of our holy religion himself found that "the traditions of the fathers" were in greater favour with the Jewish people than the divine commandments. Even Jewish doctors seemed to him to set aside the weightier matters of the law by the importance they attached to its external rites, washings, and such ordinances. And his apostle has foretold that "the time would come when his disciples would not endure sound doctrine, but *after their own lusts*, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables."

So far, then, from auguring the speedy and general reception of our principles from their superior plainness, rationality, and moral tendency, these are in fact with many the chief causes of their rejection. Besides, there are many so apathetic, that they will not take the pains, and others so busy with the concerns of this world, that they really have not time, to examine the evidence for any doctrine; and in addition to these there are not a few, who, though convinced of the superior plainness, rationality, and scripturality of Unitarianism—who, though in fact persuaded of its truth, yet find it to be so little in accordance with *the fashion*, and so much exposed to the cutting winds of popular prejudice and denunciation, that they think it better to consult their own ease and comfort, by reposing quietly under the wide-spreading shade of time-honoured Orthodoxy.

Considering all these obstacles to the diffusion of our

principles, it is not strange that they have made so little progress. I do not mean, however, to exempt Unitarians themselves from all blame. There has been, perhaps, too much apathy in some quarters, and amongst us as a body too little of the missionary spirit, and a want of co-operation, or rather joint concentration of our energies, in endeavouring to disseminate Bible Christianity. There has been also quite too much of a spurious liberality, that has led many to sacrifice truth to their own personal ease and comfort, and that has encouraged others to cast their incense freely on the altar of what they esteem an erroneous worship, as if it were to them really a matter of no consequence to whom they offered up their prayers. No doubt, amongst a recent sect, exposed to so much prejudice, conscious of their own weakness in point of numbers, and having only the convictions of their own conscience, without the miraculous testimony to the truth of their sentiments, accorded to the primitive disciples, the above lukewarmness may be readily accounted for. And yet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, Unitarianism has within the last twenty or thirty years, at least in this country, made remarkable progress. Before that time, a knowledge of its principles was confined almost exclusively to the clergy. The laity, however liberal in a general sense, knew almost nothing of its peculiar doctrines. The writer of this article well remembers, when the very name excited considerable uneasiness and alarm in a large congregation now notoriously Unitarian; and when the respected minister, for avowing openly his disbelief of the Trinity, and the other peculiar doctrines of the religion of the Westminster Confession, drew down upon himself no small share of obloquy.

Since that time, now about twenty years since, what a change! Whole congregations have discovered that they were, without being aware of it, Unitarian in their sentiments, where they had honest and able ministers to expound those principles, and to avow openly their convictions. New congregations have sprung up, advocating and founded on, those very sentiments. In districts, where, within the memory of those now living, only an isolated Unitarian was here or there to be found, there are, at present, as many hundreds. And the doctrine seems to have gained a permanent footing, and is now publicly

advocated where it was almost unknown within the memory of the present generation.

Its *present* condition, however, is thought by many to be somewhat discouraging. So long as it was really weak in point of numbers, and confined solely to the privacy of domestic retirement, it was passed over as contemptible, and that perhaps deservedly. But now that it dares to show itself openly, and to court the examination of the world, it has excited the fears, and the consequent denunciations of error, bigotry, and intolerance. And now it seems that every effort is to be made to crush it, even as the bigotry of heathen priests and rulers once laboured to destroy Christianity itself. But, thanks unto that Providence that causes even the wrath of man to praise him, the result will be, in either case, the same. Persecution is to religious truth what the vernal shower is to the tender seed, the means, under Providence, of causing it to spring forth and germinate. How it is so, it would be easy to illustrate. The first necessary step to the dissemination of any, and especially of religious truth, is *publicity*; and this distinction its opponents in general can confer on it, even more effectually than its friends. To counteract their hostility, it is only necessary that they should, by their violence, excite the *sympathy* of the more moderate portion of the community in its behalf, and this, too, bigotry seldom fails to do. There are, as I have said, two extensive classes in society, who require to be aroused: first, the apathetic, whose attention can only be awakened to any new truth by some remarkable proceedings; and secondly, the moderate or careless, whose sympathies require to be enlisted on behalf of the oppressed. Both classes can only be roused to inquiry and exertion by persecution; and though it may for a time alarm the timid, it will in the end materially serve the cause it was meant to injure, besides conferring on it another claim to be considered as the truth; for saith Paul, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" and saith a higher authority than Paul, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you."

So far, then, from lamenting the present position of

Unitarianism, its friends should rejoice in it as being one of much promise, and as being that which it should occupy on the supposition of its truth. Were it more popular with the world, they would certainly have more reason to suspect its purity; and were it as intolerant in its spirit as some of those systems to which it is opposed, they would assuredly have no reason to claim for it any alliance with primitive Christianity.

As to its *future* prospects, however favourably we may augur from the past and present, these must, in a great measure, depend upon the conduct of its friends. It is true, that if it be of God, it cannot be overthrown; but it may, nevertheless, be materially promoted or retarded in its progress by human conduct. Unitarians, at present standing on the defensive, occupy a peculiarly commanding position, if they know how to turn it to account. Let them but unite the firmness and self-devotedness of Paul, to the mildness of the beloved disciple, and all will be well. It needs not that they should retort on their opponents, as the above conduct will, by contrast, of itself speak more powerfully than words; and intolerance will ever, by its violence, defeat its own object in the end. To mildness and self-devotedness, let them add some system of joint co-operation for the effectual dissemination of their principles. Let them especially concentrate their energies in proclaiming the leading features of our faith—the strict unity, *paternity*, and *spirituality* of God—the purely moral and sanctifying nature of the gospel of Christ, and its peculiarly consolatory tendency in the hour of sickness and death according to our views. Ours is a faith despised, or, rather, indeed, abhorred, because it is unknown. Men dislike it, not for its defects, but because they are ignorant of its merits. Not because they have examined, but because they have *not* examined, it meets their condemnation. This very circumstance points out to us our duty. Were ours an old-established faith, we might fold our arms, and remain stationary. But being a faith quite new to many in society, and being so much opposed because it is unknown, our duty is plainly an aggressive one. Our business is steadily but temperately to press our principles on the public attention, to lose no favourable opportunity of recommending them to our brethren's notice, to spare no

pains in causing our simple, but sublime and consoling faith to be better known.

With zeal for truth, however, should be combined zeal for all those practical measures of benevolence that are so eminently calculated to promote morality and improve society; such as the combined efforts that are at present being made against slavery, war, drunkenness, and the various other social and moral evils that still so extensively exist in the nineteenth century of the Christian era. Religious truth is of no importance in itself, any farther than it tends to promote human happiness. And, therefore, zeal for truth, in the abstract, is useless, and must degenerate into mere sectarianism, unless associated with a corresponding zeal for every well-considered measure of practical utility. Besides, it should be remembered that "the tree is known by its fruits;" and this rule applies as well to creeds and churches as to private individuals. It will not do, then, to declaim about the moral, peaceful, and liberal tendencies of Unitarian Christianity, if Unitarians be not the foremost to advocate, in its fullest extent, the cause of temperance, human liberty, and peace.

It is true, that when all is done, the progress of our principles may not be such as the sanguine would anticipate, or the zealous wish. But we should be prepared to expect, with our great Master, that much of the seed which we scatter will be lost. Some, it may be, "will fall by the way side," which will become the prey of "the fowls of the air," or a thousand accidents; some among "the thorns," or cares of this world, by which it will be choked; some upon the "stony ground," where, by the heat of persecution, it will speedily be withered;—but a remnant at least will find its way to good ground, where it will eventually bring forth abundantly. Truth is not like the gourd of Jonah, which sprung up in a night and withered in a night; it is rather like the grain of mustard seed of which the Saviour speaks; or, to take an illustration better known in these countries, like the acorn that in time becomes the majestic oak, it requires even centuries for its full development. The religious faith, prejudices, and modes of thought of a whole community, are not to be changed in an instant. It is a work demanding vast labour, time, and unwearied assiduity. Let then Unitarians bring not only zeal, but faith and patience to

the task, would they remove the mountain. Let them remember that Christ himself taught his doctrine to ignorant, prejudiced, and misjudging ears;—that, even up to the close of his arduous ministry, he seemed to have laboured in vain and spent his strength for nought; but yet his gospel, like the leaven hid in the meal, went forth to impregnate and renovate society until the whole was leavened.

In conclusion, another suggestion it may be allowable to make. In affairs of business, men combine to effect their purposes. When their interests are at stake, they speak out plainly, and allow no false delicacy to seal their lips. They have no diffidence in advertising the merits of their undertaking, and avail themselves in every possible way of the labours of the press to attract the public attention towards them. Besides, they do not waste their energies on matters of minor import, but concentrate them on the leading object they have in view. Why should not Unitarians act thus in advocating their principles? Do apathy and indifference become meritorious only on the subject of religion? When they learn to bring half the well-directed energy to the propagation of their sentiments that Anti-corn-Law Leaguers, Repealers, or Agricultural Societies at present do to theirs, speedy would be the downfall of reputed, though most falsely reputed, Orthodoxy.

Clonmel.

B. C. D.

SIMPLE THOUGHTS ON SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

IN offering a few remarks on the subject of Sunday Schools, we need not to fear reproach or contempt. We have not to wrestle with contending opinions, to encounter "the world's dread laugh"—the scoff of the bigot or of the liberal. *Sunday Schools are the fashion.* Every congregation has its Sunday School attached; its army of fifty or an hundred juvenile recruits assembling weekly to be taught how to put on, and how to wear the Christian armour! And every well instructed youth, and every gentle maiden, is invited to become a teacher of babes! This is a teaching age—a Sunday-school age! Fashion and duty for once take hands, and, borrowing the language of

the Gospel, they cry, "Come, work to-day in my vineyard." They are prompt to frown on all "who having put a hand to the plough incline to look back." This is not an age when men, like the Pharisees of old, murmur at every good work done on the Sabbath-day. They now make no objection that the spiritually blind should receive their sight; or that those whom the adversary has bowed down in ignorance, should stand erect, or be made "every whit whole on the Sabbath-day." Alas! how bowed down, how spiritually blind, are many of those who are providentially led to seek the light of the Sabbath-school! But hark! let us listen. There is a voice whose tone is kindlier than the voice of fashion—more commanding than the call of duty. As Peter said unto his companions, "It is the Lord." Yes, 'tis his voice—the sweet voice of love divine—which says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Is the hour come when that voice is heard through the Christian world?—when the spirit of the command is recognised and obeyed? Thanks be to God, it is! Not then by any of those who have entered on that delightful duty, let this best of causes fail to progress.

"Say unto the children of Israel that they go forward," was the command given by God to his servant Moses. And we would say unto the friends and teachers of the Sunday School, that they go forward. Let the young teacher consider, that by imparting some of that instruction that his fostered youth has received, to those who may have none to foster or care for them, he is preparing himself for the kingdom of God. And though he may find—and perhaps he shall find—the duty, from time to time, less encouraging, or even less interesting, than he may have anticipated, yet let him not be disheartened. Let him go forward. He cannot hope always to walk in green pastures—to roam listlessly beside still waters. Should then his pupils turn out to be more thoughtless, more listless, or more irregular in their attendance, than he had enthusiastically reckoned upon; yet, let him go forward. Should he himself, or herself (of course we speak to women as well as men), find the labour prove too arduous—too exacting—demanding that time which was formerly given to innocent recreation, or even to useful reading—yet would we speak unto him that he go forward. He has

read enough ; he has amused himself enough ; let him up and be doing. We read to guide us in duty—we recreate, to strengthen us for duty. Let him then go forward—before the persevering performer of duty all difficulties disappear—“the crooked places become straight, the rough places plain.” The spirit of love is all powerful when its voice is heard calling men to do their holy master’s work ; and it is here scarcely needful to say that patience and affection must accompany perseverance in this duty. All children demand these qualities from their teachers. Should we allow ourselves to be sharp or crabbed, or even indifferent, to a timid and afflicted child, it will quickly be discouraged. Alas ! it may get sufficient of all these at home from its ignorant, though it may be well meaning parents. Let then the poor child feel here the joy of coming where love reigns. Allow it to breathe freely in this atmosphere of kindness.

We have ourselves met with some of these poor children sad, and miserably clothed. One interesting little girl, of about eight years of age, we have in vain watched to see smile, and at length resolved to visit her home. This we found to consist of one dingy room ; too small to allow of a bedstead of any kind to stand out in it. A small table, and a seat or two, were all it could boast. The living furniture consisted of an aged woman and a younger. They talked of having seen better days. The younger was busily employed spotting lace. This was the home, and these the friends of this care-worn little one. We mentioned her name, and soon made our acquaintance ; and venturing to inquire if their little daughter had any ill health, or other cause for dejection, we found none imputed, but her anxiety to please at school. Once we remember we did see this child smile ; it was when, in the course of teaching, we asserted that God cared for her. She looked up at last with a brightened smile of intelligence and joy.

Many cases of dismal homes, and scanty joys, must come to the knowledge of those who undertake to visit for Sunday Schools ; and here we may be allowed to urge the necessity of making acquaintance with the friends and homes of the children. Even giving instruction is not more a necessary part of the plan of benefitting the children than visiting ; and the former must ever be more

effectual when joined with the latter. Some schools consider this best done by a superintendant, accompanied, if convenient, by one of the more experienced teachers. At others it is, we believe, arranged that each respective class is visited by its own head. This latter method may do in the male school; but it is obvious that it would not answer the young female teachers in towns or cities. But whatever method may be adopted, one thing is certain, that no Sunday-school will long flourish, or produce all the results of which it is capable, unless visiting be attended to, and be regarded as part of the system.

This subject leads us naturally to consider the wisdom of making the lending library of the school a blessing to the friends of the scholars, as well as to themselves. The parents are very fond of tracts, and even of more voluminous works, and may be easily gratified by giving the loan of two books to the pupil—one suited to his own capacity, the other more advanced. One inconvenience sometimes arises to those appointed to furnish or replenish a school library—namely, those simple works, desirable for selection, are not unfrequently of a cost beyond their worth, occasioned by their being unnecessarily gay in their bindings; tricked out with little gold ornaments, which make them far more suitable for a Christmas, or birth-day present, for a young friend of our own grade, than a useful and reasonable acquisition to the library of a Sunday School. Would it not be well in those cases, if it could be so managed, that some editions might be on sale in a plain wrapper at a lower price; so that nothing be charged for, or as little as possible, but the intrinsic value of the work itself. No person can deny that the matter of a sixpence, in the purchase of each of fifteen or twenty books, is worth saving; as seven or ten shillings might go far in renewing a plain, unpretending library. Besides, these fine covers are of no use, but only serve to vex the librarian, who must lament to see with what heedlessness they are soiled and torn.

Irregularity of attendance, in either teacher or pupil, is an annoying drawback to the prosperity of Sunday Schools—it is neither pleasant to bear, nor easy to cure. If a teacher be thus careless, who may rebuke him? His own good sense alone may do it. If this fault be in the pupil, the difficulty is not great, to prove, by the holding back

of attendance tickets, or some other method as simple, that the matter tends to his own disadvantage.

We have been connected with a Sunday School where examinations have been introduced. We put in our veto against everything of the kind; considering, as we do, that examinations, which must be an evil in all schools wherever they are, or of whatever kind, are particularly pernicious to the pupil of the poor school. Temptations they are to vanity, presumption, and self-conceit. A child may excel in what has been prepared to make a show of; but a real, substantial advance in Christian knowledge can never be acquired or proved thus. Surely everything that may instil the ill weeds of envy and ostentation should be carefully avoided in the instruction of the poor. If there must be rewards given to them, it would be always best, by a close attention to the regularity of their attendance, and general conduct, to contrive so to allot them, as to make them feel the value of true excellence. We have on the subject a valued authority in favour of our opinion. Waterston, in his work on Moral and Spiritual Culture (page 143), inquires—"How are rewards looked upon? They may strengthen morality or weaken it; and they always do one or the other. That reward which is unjust, naturally has an immoral tendency. That reward which is given without regard to character, has an immoral tendency. That reward which leads to pride or ambition, has already awakened immorality. Thus, rewards injudiciously given may lead to moral evil." Again the same author says (page 144), "Virtue should be pursued virtuously, and so should learning. Let the teacher, then, if he thinks it best to give rewards, do so with serious reflection, and in doing so strive to teach morality!"

Hitherto we have spoken equally of male and female teachers and pupils. One remark we have to make applies equally to the female teachers of the children. It is this. Let every young teacher be careful to set an example of neatness and propriety in her dress; avoiding, as much as possible, useless ornaments, and dazzling; attractive finery. If they be not a little careful here, it may happen that, whilst they are attempting to teach wisdom to the young and the poor of their own sex, they may be unintentionally filling their minds with folly, and their hearts with envy. Nay, let it rather be, that when the

young pupil has become a woman, and looks back upon the time she gave her weekly attendance at the school, she may remember, not only the kindness, wisdom, and patience of her teacher, but also her modest air, and neat and simple attire.

And now, my young friends (for to speak to the young is our delight), we would suggest to you this thought, that though the children are indebted to you, you are also, beyond all doubt, debtors to them. If there be any of you on whom deep sorrow has passed, have not your duties and interests here induced you, for a time, to come out of yourselves, and take comfort to your troubled heart? Have they not imparted new strength to your soul, and new interest to your life; given your energies a new impulse; your affections a new object? Your attendance here furnishes you likewise with a new subject for your prayers. Remember, then, when you "go into your closets, and shut the door, and pray to your Father in heaven," forget not, as you beseech the Lord for yourselves and for your connexions, to bring also before him, from the fulness of your hearts, the wants and the sorrows of these, too often, bereaved little ones, with whom God has connected you in Gospel love, and in a manner entrusted to your care, through the medium of the Sabbath School. Pray, then, for them and for their suffering families: they have need of prayer! Oh! had you seen in the cold, empty garret, the aged grandmother, mild, patient, and piously resigned, grateful too for every kindness shown, and full of strong affections for the little one entrusted to her care—his mother being in an hospital, dropsical and a lunatic, in consequence of her long struggles with abject poverty and the sorrow of the heart, having been deserted by her husband, who was a soldier. Yet was that child so well and so tenderly cared for, that his cheek was not pale, nor his manners rude, nor his temper sour. He was never allowed to play with idle children in the streets. His affections were warm to his good guardian; and we know that they were warm to his friends and teachers also.

A poor, a very poor little girl we have also known, who loved improvement while she was able to receive it—pale, sorrowful, and meek, bearing in gentle silence the painful disease that brought her to an early tomb. She was in a dark room, where want and sorrow reigned, sitting,

not lying—for being diseased; and a little deformed, she could only sit up, night and day, on a poor pallet, which was, when we saw her, occupied at the other side by a sister lying in a feverish delirium. A mother, who had nothing to give them but what she kind gratuitously bestowed, being out of employment, stood by them and wept. Again, a child of about ten years of age having returned to school after a long absence, on her mother being visited as formerly, it was found some heavy afflictions had fallen on her family. An infant had been buried; an elder son, a lad of about sixteen, able and willing to work, had broken his back, in consequence of heavy labour having been put upon him that was too much for his years. We saw him sitting by the fire, his head swelled, his face pale, and his back bent. Here we must remark, that the books of the lending library, which his sister brought home from the school, were to him a source of consolation and of profitable instruction. The parents were both threatened with a disease of the lungs. The mother was amiable, active, and industrious; the father, a sober man, and in good employment; but, alas! it may be feared, that though lately far better provided for than the inhabitants of the garret or the cellar, sickness is doing much to bring them to a level with these.

The few facts we have here brought forward, have not been selected for their singularity, nor as extreme cases of affliction in the homes of the poor. We are too certain that the friends and homes of the young pupils of many Sunday Schools are, to all outward appearance, barren enough generally of joy and comfort. We have brought them forward, in the second place, to remind the young teacher that as such troubles and deprivations are no light evils, they should remember ever to join affection and feeling to authority whilst imparting instruction. We have hinted at this duty above, and here we have brought our reasons for it.

And now having thrown together a few remarks on Sunday Schools, we would deprecate the idea of taking upon us to dictate to the wise; but rather desire to express our sympathy with these establishments generally, and with all who befriend them, and impart a word or two of our experience to the young teacher. Wise men and good have written on the subject—Todd, Muzzy, Waterston,

and Channing. Their beautiful thoughts should be studied by the juvenile teacher; for these sages knew, and do know, that the Sabbath School should be valued and assisted, not from compliance with the fashion of the day, but from the spirit of love and obedience to Christ Jesus. And we have seen that the young teacher is debtor to the Sunday scholar, for so has God appointed that every duty faithfully performed must produce a reciprocal benefit.

Having concluded the above observations, we took up the volume we have already quoted from, and found with joy that the author bears us out in the last sentiment, and some others. Concerning his work on "Moral and Religious Culture," we would urge it on every teacher to study it carefully—nay, we would go so far as to advise that he consider not that he has qualified himself for his work, unless he have done so. Nor can we better conclude these simple thoughts than by the following quotation, taken from the close of that division of the work called "Religious Education."

"Were the blessed Saviour at this moment to stand before us, and were he to say to us, as he said of old to Simon Peter, 'Lovest thou me?' every pulse would throb, every lip would quiver, and the voice of every Christian would go up as from one soul, 'Lord, thou knowest that we love thee.' Then would the voice of Jesus come to us again as it came to Peter—'Feed my lambs.' Yes, they who would love Jesus must feed his lambs."

M. B.

SKETCH OF THE LATE REV. H. WARE, JUN. D.D.

THE *Bible Christian* of December contained an obituary of Dr. Ware: but we believe that a sketch of the life and character of this pious and enlightened divine will be read with interest, by the many to whom his name is dear and his writings familiar.

We have been called to mourn the earthly extinction, in rapid and melancholy succession, of those lights of our faith which shed so bright a lustre on New England, and drew our hearts thither as to the chosen abode of piety and truth. Among others, Worcester, Bancroft, Follen, Channing, and now Ware, are gone; but the spirit of

their life and godliness remains to quicken and encourage the surviving.

Henry Ware was born in Kinghaven, Massachusetts, on the 21st of April, 1794. Educated in a pastor's home, his earliest feelings were hallowed by the influence of domestic piety, and his first and boyish taste was for that sacred office which he afterwards so eminently adorned. He was licensed as a preacher of the gospel, after having completed, with much honour, his preparatory studies, in July, 1815; and, about eighteen months after, was appointed to the pastoral charge of the Second Church in Boston. In the public services of religion, he was more distinguished by simple, earnest, affectionate appeals, and by fervent devotion, than by learned disquisitions, or graceful rhetoric. But in the private ministrations of religion, his excellence was more remarkable, and it is said by the present minister of the church over which he was placed, that, in his intercourse with the families that were under Dr. Ware's charge, he has found more frequent and emphatic testimony to his excellence as a Pastor, than a Preacher. Where the definite recollection of his sermons has faded, the exact words that he has uttered in the sick chamber, or to the mourner's ear, have been indelibly engraven on grateful memories. We have also a pleasing evidence of the impression which his pastoral labours made upon his flock, in the following extract from an address presented to him when his connexion with the Second Church ceased. "In reviewing the circumstances of our connexion, we look back upon the events of many years, endeared to us and our families by the memory of your kindness, your sympathy, and your Christian fidelity. In sickness and sorrow, how often have you come to us with the comforts and hopes of the gospel. * * * How often, in our afflictions, have we leaned upon you; and while we have been comforted, have been taught to put our trust in Him who is able to save. How have we seen the eye of the dying, when the light of life was fading from it, turned upwards to that brighter light from Heaven; and the heart of the mourner set upon that better mansion, which our Master has gone to prepare. And if occasions have sometimes occurred, in which we were divided in opinion, and had begun to be alienated in feeling, how have our differences ceased when you have come among us in the spirit and influence of the gospel of

peace. It is pleasant for us to dwell upon these recollections. They are deeply seated in our inmost breasts; and mingled as they are with the image of your truth, and love, and faithfulness, they can never leave us."

During Dr. Ware's ministry in Boston, he held a regular meeting on one week-day evening in the vestry, for religious improvement, when a few of his people, after the toils of the day, were wont to meet him, and refresh their hearts by joining in the devotional exercises which he so fervently conducted. He used afterwards to dwell on the hours spent at these meetings with peculiar satisfaction; and in a conversation with the present pastor of the church, shortly before his death, referring to two of these meetings, he said, "The two happiest evenings of my life—yes, the two happiest of my life—were, one of them, when we had met to converse upon the Lord's Supper, and the vestry was so full, that we were obliged to adjourn into the church; and the other, when after an interesting discussion, we sang together, at parting, as if every soul present felt the grandeur and joyousness of the sentiment, the hymn which concludes with this glorious verse—

"Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching, through Immanuel's ground,
To fairer worlds on high."

Dr. Ware also held a meeting for religious improvement, on the last night of every year, and his services on these interesting occasions are said to have been peculiarly impressive. One who heard him at this season urging the duty of improvement on the young, remarks,—“No words from mortal lips ever affected me like those. I can see his very look—I can hear his very tone, as, with the unction of a Paul, he uttered the solemn charge with which that discourse concludes, ‘I charge you as in the presence of God, who sees and will judge you—in the name of Jesus Christ who beseeches you to come to him and live—by all your hopes of happiness and life—I charge you, let not this year die, and leave you impenitent. Do not dare to utter defiance on its decaying hours. But in the stillness of its awful midnight, prostrate yourselves penitently before your Maker; and let the morning sun rise upon you, thoughtful and serious men.’”

In the beginning of 1828, Dr. Ware's health began to decline, partly, it is believed, in consequence of his constant

exertion both of body and mind in the sacred work to which he was so heartily devoted; and his strength became so impaired in the course of that year, that he was obliged to retire from the more active duties of his office. A voyage to Europe was recommended by his medical friends, as necessary to recruit his frame. He left home in the spring of 1829, and spent more than a year in these countries. He happened to be in Belfast on the day when the present respected pastor of the Second Belfast Congregation was ordained, August 6th; and, though in feeble health, he attended the congregational dinner. The few words which he spoke on that occasion, in reference to the difficulties with which the Non-subscribing Presbyterians of Ulster were struggling, are beautifully characteristic of the man. "In that part of New England from which I lately parted, the people have passed through scenes very similar to those which I understand have just occurred here. We were visited with similar storms of a persecuting nature, but our church was built on a rock, and could not fall. I would willingly give a word of comfort to my brethren here. I would say to them—preserve your integrity, and persevere. Your cause is a good one: and I bid you 'God speed.' Put your trust in Heaven, and all will be well."

On his return home, his health being greatly improved by his tour, he entered on his duties as Professor of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pastoral care in Harvard University—an office for which he was by taste and acquirements particularly fitted, and which, we believe, had been created for him. It was hoped, that here his engagements would be less multiplied and onerous, and that his health might be preserved; but the active spirit he possessed, and still more the inconsiderateness of his friends, soon involved him here in labours more arduous and complicated than those of his ministry in Boston had been. He remained at Cambridge till the Summer of 1842, when, exhausted and enfeebled by over-exertion, he resigned the chair which he had so diligently and efficiently filled for twelve years, and retired with his family to the village of Framingham about twenty miles from Boston. Here for some time his health improved; he planned many works of usefulness to occupy the leisure which he enjoyed, and among other tasks which he had assigned

himself, was a biographical sketch of the excellent Noah Worcester. But his earthly labours were drawing to a close. In April, while on a visit in Boston, he had an attack of apoplexy, which threatened to prove immediately fatal. From this however he gradually recovered, and had made arrangements to edit the *Christian Examiner*, the principal periodical of our denomination in America. On the 14th of August, he had an attack similar to that which he had had in the spring, and after this he never raised himself from his pillow. During his last illness, which continued for six weeks, he had only intervals of consciousness; but the remembrance of these is very precious to his friends. He seemed to regard his approaching dissolution with serenity, assured that the fit time had arrived; and he looked forward with unfaltering faith to the future and eternal life. It was, says one who never left him, as when the parting of the clouds on a dark evening shows here and there a bright star in the space beyond; we know as well that the whole heaven is radiant with its countless myriads still, as if the whole atmosphere were clear, and we saw them all. In one of the brief lucid intervals that occurred before his death, warm and elevated expressions of gratitude to the Saviour, intermingled with affectionate addresses and counsels to his family, fell from his lips. His thoughts turned to the closing hours and acts of the Master whom he loved; and speaking of the design of Jesus in instituting the last supper, as if inspired by the very spirit of his own boundless benevolence, he stretched out his feeble arms, saying, "He intended it for all, he would gather all to his embrace." At length, on the evening of September 21st, he fell into an apoplectic state, in which he remained till the next morning, when the spirit was released from its worn-out members. The pious expressions which he uttered in his last moments of consciousness, while his dearest earthly friends were around him, shows that there was present in that chamber, the spirit which is breathed forth in his own beautiful lines:

"Kneel down at the couch of departing faith,
 And hear the last words the believer saith.
 He has bidden adieu to his earthly friends;
 There is peace in his eye that upward bends;
 There is peace in his calm confiding air;
 For his last thoughts are God's—his last words prayer."

Dr. Ware leaves behind him a widow and seven children, the eldest son being pastor of the Unitarian church at Fall River. His remains repose at Mount Auburn, near to the treasured dust of Buckminster, Worcester, and Channing.

We reserve for the next number of the *Bible Christian*, a notice of the writings of this eminent Christian.

BELFAST RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION SOCIETY.

[The following letter refers to a society for conversation on religious subjects, recently formed in this town by certain members of the First and Second Congregations. It is believed by some, whose opinion in such a matter is most valuable, that the Society, as now organized, is not likely to produce the good effects at which its framers, with a most commendable zeal, have aimed. All, however, must feel gratified by the desire which the formation of such a Society expresses for religious improvement; and must hope that the efforts which are made, will soon be directed into the most useful channel.—*Ed.*]

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—Doubts as to the utility of the “Religious Conversation Society” having been expressed, I think I may, not unprofitably, take up a small portion of your space, in endeavouring to show the necessity for its formation.

Unfortunately it is, and has been, too evident, for a long period; that the Unitarians, as a body, are not sufficiently alive to the interests of religion. Condemning the too public displays of sanctimoniousness in other sects, whose spirit is often discovered by the uncharitable sentiments they utter, we have hitherto, I regret to say, fallen into the opposite extreme of listlessness and indifference.

Painful proofs of this exist in many ways too evident to require notice, and most certainly suffice to furnish the self-styled “Orthodox” party with no mean grounds for the assumption, so constantly repeated, that the spirit of Unitarianism is soulless and dead. I must confess, that did I not feel that there are in the principles of “Christian Unitarianism” a purer, more exalted, and more inspiring influence than in those of any other faith, the coldness and *apparent* indifference of its advocates would long since have driven me back into the church from whence I came. Believing it, however, to possess these qualities pre-eminently, I consider myself highly privileged in professing

it, and would, consequently, be acting very selfishly indeed, did I not endeavour to promote its extension by every means in my power.

Holding these views, I am, therefore, happy to find that such a Society as the one in question has been formed, as I feel confident that if it is controlled and governed by the pure spirit of Christianity, it cannot fail, under God's blessing, to awaken our zeal, expand our minds, promote right religion in the heart, and foster feelings of charity towards those who differ from us.

"Inquiry is to truth," says Paley, "what friction is to the diamond. It proves its hardness, adds to its lustre, and excites new admiration. Truth results from discussion and from controversy, as investigated by the labours and researches of private persons; whatever, therefore, prohibits these, obstructs that industry and that liberty which it is the common interest of mankind to promote."

No person can dislike sectarianism more than I do, as I consider it totally opposed to the spirit of Christianity; but really, when we find our principles *attacked* so often, and so lamentable ignorance prevailing as to our religious opinions, I cannot but admit the necessity of it in cases such as ours. Would that we could all, of every sect, unite under the comprehensive name of Christians, and, forgetting the peculiarities of creed, remember only that we are children of the same father, recipients of the same mercies, and expectants of the same glory—being zealous only in the promotion of every good work and word. Unfortunately for the religious world, however, it must go through many a severe trial, ere such a consummation can be brought about. Implicit belief in certain incomprehensible dogmas, now considered necessary for salvation, must be done away with, the whole popular framework of Christianity must be renovated, and religion must be viewed purely as a *spiritual* influence, infusing itself into every thought and action of man, before we can hope for such a change. Such societies as the one now in question, are calculated, in my opinion, to assist in promoting this reformation in no trifling degree, were they to be attached to every congregation. If they serve even to accomplish but two purposes, I think their importance will be established; viz. a firm *confirmation* in the truth of the principles we have espoused, and the *formation of a habit of*

reflection upon religious matters. We must not suppose, however, that they are altogether *free* from danger (what effort of man is?). Many questions may be proposed by persons inclined to scepticism, from unfriendly motives, and from a desire to contaminate the Society with their opinions; the greatest care, therefore, must be given by the Committee to the consideration of the subjects proposed by Members, ere they permit them to be entered into; otherwise much harm may unintentionally result. For my part, I do not see the utility of entering into the *metaphysics* of religion in public as erroneous judgment, on such questions, can have no injurious effect upon our morals. *They* are, I conceive, more adapted for *private* meditation and investigation. When entered into in public, when there are present, of necessity, a number of minds differently constituted, some—perhaps the majority of them, with neither the inclination, nor leisure to investigate, it is almost impossible to guard against evil consequences. Giving the utmost limits to reason that we can, still, we must admit, there is a point where reason ends and faith begins. Can we attempt to fathom the omnipotence of the Deity, or can we account for the existence of sin and its consequences, as contrasted with the attributes of unbounded mercy and love? No, no; such investigations are unprofitable and vain. We must not injure our faith by “seeking to be wise above what is written;” for “who by searching can find out God?” It is enough for us to know that his purposes are holy, just, and good; that in this world we see as through a glass, darkly, but that a time will come when all doubts will be resolved, and we shall know, even as we are known. Let us then “avoid such doubtful disputations,” and seek after such things only as conduce to *practical* religion. If we are so disposed, we have much that is interesting and instructive to work upon; a wide field, amply sufficient to keep up a lively interest in our meetings.

In conclusion Sir, I would repeat the hope that the formation of the “Religious Conversation Society,” may be in no slight degree the means of awakening us into increased exertion. If we enter it from *pure* motives, I have no fears for the result; and if any have joined it from any other—from a desire to display his abilities, or other unworthy motives, I would have him pause in his

career, and reflect upon the sin he is committing, ere it is too late. But, Sir, we have every reason to hope better things, from the commencement we have made, and for my part, I look forward with confidence. Above all let us be governed by that *spirit of charity*, which is so becoming to all; but especially so to a class of Christians whose principles are mainly based upon it.

VINDEX.

P. S. As the clergymen of our denomination are honorary members, I hope they will give us as much of their countenance as possible. It would be highly desirable, that at least one of them should attend each meeting, as their presence would add a moral weight to the society, which would increase its usefulness.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

CHRISTMAS HYMN.—ISAIAH liii. 7.

Inscribed to Rev. W. C——, Ballinahinech.

How beautiful his feet, who brings

Glad tidings from afar!

Behold him on the distant hills,

Like Morning's welcome star!

The joy that is before him set,

All other joy excels:

A world—a *world of souls* to win,

His angel feet impels!

No mountains can impair his speed,

No floods delay his path:

He comes, the messenger of God,

With man's relieve from death.

Behold the chosen one of God,

To whom all power is given;

He calms the waves—he wakes the dead—

He leads the hosts of Heaven!

Zion, be joyful in thy King,

All Gods he reigns above.

The Earth and Sea proclaim his power,

Jesus proclaims his love!

BT. DILLON.

ADMONITION.

Sleeper, awaken! Time glides on
With silent, ceaseless flight:
Much is the work yet to be done,
And quickly comes the night.

A very little time is ours,—
While it is called *to-day*:
Gold cannot purchase back lost hours,
Nor gifts procure delay.

Then forward,—keeping full in view,
The end which God commands;
And what thy spirit finds to do,
Perform with ready hands.

Nor doom thyself, with fruitless tears
And late regrets, to mourn
The long account of wasted years,
That never can return.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

A TRUE STORY.

It was one of the first days of spring; when a lady who had been watching by the sick-bed of her mother for some weeks, went out to take a little exercise, and enjoy the fresh air. She hoped that she might hear a bird sing, or see some little wild flower, which would speak to her of future hope, for her heart was heavy with anxiety and sorrow.

After walking some distance, she came to a ropewalk. She was familiar with the place, and being fond of the smell of tar, she entered. At one end of the building, she saw a little boy turning a very large wheel: she thought it was too laborious work for such a child, and as she came near him she spoke to him.

“Who sent you to this place?” she asked him.—“Nobody, I came of myself.”—“Does your father know you are here?”—“I have no father.”—“Are you paid for your labour?”—“Yes, I get fourpence a day.”—“What do you do with your money?”—“I give it all to my mother.”—“Do you like this work?”—“Well enough;

but if I did not, I should do it, that I might get money for my mother."—"How long do you work in the day?"—"From nine till twelve in the morning, and from two till five in the afternoon."—"How old are you?"—"Almost nine."—"Are you never tired of turning this great wheel?"—"Yes, sometimes."—"And what do you do then?"—"I take the other hand."

The lady gave him a piece of money. "Is this for my mother?" said he, looking pleased.—"No, it is for yourself," she replied.—"Thank you ma'am," the boy said; and the lady bade him farewell.

She went home, strengthened in her devotion to duty, and instructed in true practical Christian philosophy, by the words and example of a little child; and she said to herself, the next time that duty seems too hard for me, I will, like this little boy, not complain, but "take the other hand."

From the Child's Friend.

THE SHADOWS.

MAMMA.

The candles are lighted, the fire blazes bright,
The curtains are drawn to keep out the cold air;
What makes you so grave, little darling, to-night?
And where is your smile, little quiet one, where?

CHILD.

Mamma, I see something so dark on the wall,
It moves up and down, and it looks very strange;
Sometimes it is large, and sometimes it is small;
Pray, tell me what is it, and why does it change?

MAMMA.

It is mamma's shadow that puzzles you so,
And there is your own close beside it, my love:
Now run round the room, it will go where you go,
When you sit, 'twill be still, when you rise it will move.

CHILD.

I don't like to see it, do please let me ring
For Betsy to take all the shadows away.

MAMMA.

No; Betsy oft carries a heavier thing,
But she could not lift this, should she try a whole day.

These wonderful shadows are caused by the light
From fire, and from candles, upon us that falls;
Were we not sitting here, all that place would be bright,
But the light can't shine through us, you know, on the wall.

And when you are out some fine day in the sun,
I'll take you where shadows of apple-trees lie;
And houses, and cottages, too,—every one
Casts a shade when the sun's shining bright in the sky.

Now hold up your mouth, and give me a sweet kiss,—
Our shadows kiss too! dont you see it quite plain?

CHILD.

O yes! and I thank you for telling me this;
I'll not be afraid of a shadow again.

From Mrs. Duncan's "Rhymes for my Children."

REVIEW.

A Voice from the Vintage. By the author of "The Women of England." Pp. 215.

WE hail with delight this "Voice from the Vintage," as an important addition to what may be termed our "Temperance literature." It is cheering to see one of the most popular writers of the day, contributing to the support of a cause which has been hitherto chiefly advocated and sustained by the artisan and the labourer; and it is gratifying to behold an enlightened woman lending the influence of her intellect and example against a custom which, destructive as it has been universally, has been especially destructive to woman's virtue, and woman's happiness. This volume is written in a pleasing style, and is free from those extravagant statements and violent denunciations in which many temperance tracts abound. It embodies the leading arguments in favour of Total Abstinence, interspersed with much interesting illustration. We trust that it may be widely circulated, both in these countries and in America, where we perceive that it has been reprinted, and that it may lead many in the higher ranks,

who have hitherto regarded the Temperance reform with coldness or hostility, to give it their countenance and support. Unhappily, the more educated classes have in general, at least in Ulster, withheld their support; partly, though we fear not entirely, from an impression often expressed, and oftener felt, that Teetotalism and the Repeal agitation are secretly connected. It is argued, not very logically we think, that no one who is opposed to a Repeal of the Union, should abstain from intoxicating drinks. It is not our province to allude to party politics farther than to say, that there is no connexion between Total Abstinence and any political party; that the great apostle of Temperance has most religiously avoided even an allusion to political questions; and that, the more temperance prevails in our country among all parties, the safer and more prosperous may we expect her to be in all her relations. Heartless patriots must they be, who could raise so groundless an opposition, and thus stay the progress of a Reform which is pregnant with good for our country and the world, far greater than statesmen and politicians could accomplish.

We trust that Mrs. Ellis's book will be read by many who have been prejudiced against the principles which it advocates, and that this "voice" of reason and eloquence will carry conviction to many minds. The volume is divided into five chapters on the following subjects: viz. Peculiarities of Intemperance as a Vice; Intemperance as it operates on Individual Character; Moderation; Total Abstinence; Objections to joining the Temperance Society; Private Objections and General Encouragement. We have only room for the following extract which, presents a striking, but not, we think, an overdrawn picture of a scene at a Temperance Meeting.—

"Often as the motives of human beings are mistaken in their transactions one with another, often as the actions of the benevolent are misunderstood, and a mean or selfish character assigned to feelings the most noble and disinterested, never have such motives, actions, or feelings, been more grossly misrepresented, than in reference to the temperance pledge. Oh! could such cavillers be made to believe me when I say, there are sensations of thrilling interest connected with the signing of this pledge, which heroes well might envy, and rich men give their gold to buy. Why, on that very page, disfigured by the unskilled lettering of a ploughman's hand, there are tears of such intense and exquisite

delight, as unsophisticated Nature weeps when her emotions are too strong for smiles.

“ Upon that page, perhaps, the fond and faithful wife is gazing, heedless of the passing crowd. Her thoughts go back to the dark ruined home she has just left without a hope, and to her poor babes, who, weak with hunger, wept themselves to sleep. With borrowed cloak to hide her destitution, she stole out at the dark hour, and mixing in the crowd, found place amongst her fellows in poverty and distress, who came at least to *hear* of a strange but simple plan for calling back such wanderers as her husband long had been. And now she listens most intently, for the language is all such as comes home to her experience, and is level with her understanding. ‘The speaker must have known her case. He tells of hope! but no—that never can be hers! If *he* were here—perhaps—and then a deep, deep sigh bursts from her lips; but she listens still, and more intently, to the speaker’s moving words, until her heart becomes too full; and she looks round to see if any amongst her neighbours—for of friends she has none left—are there to profit by those words of touching truth. What ails the woman? Whom has she seen amongst the crowd? Her cheek is flushed with burning crimson, and her eyes are bright with living fire. It is—it must be he! She cannot be mistaken in her husband’s form, still beautiful to her. Far back amongst the crowd he stands with folded arms, his gaze intent upon the speaker’s face. No smile of thoughtless folly flits across his brow, but a deep earnestness is stamped on every feature as he gazes on. But what is that which moves him now? A simple tale of woman’s truth. The wife beholds him dash the tear-drop from his eye. A gathering mist is in her own, but she forgets it all; nothing is present with her but that other self—that life in which alone she lives. Alas! it is all over: the speaker ceases, and the company break up. The wife waits anxiously the moment when her husband shall withdraw, thinking to join him at the door; yet, fearing to intrude too hastily upon his softened feelings, she stands patiently resigned, with folded arms upon her breast, pushed here and there by the receding crowd, no one of whom takes note of her or hers. Still there is something to be done beside the platform where the speaker stands, and numbers gather to the spot. A book is opened—a pen is offered—a kind and friendly voice invites the company to sign. Make way! the figure of a man advances from behind. Make way! for wonder glances forth from every eye. Behind that figure is a female form—a shadow—a pale faded thing, so feeble that she cannot stand, but leans upon his shoulder with one clasp-ing arm. ‘There! I have signed!’ exclaims the man; ‘and now, my wife, come home, and let us pray to-night.’ Stop but one moment. What a hand is hers! so thin, so trembling; yet she grasps that pen as if it were a rod of iron, to inscribe deep words of mercy in the rock for ever. They pass away together—that penniless and friendless pair, strong in each other’s truth, rich in each other’s love. Weeks glide away—months—or perhaps a year; and they are seen together now, so happy! with their rosy children, standing at their cottage door—thrusting their blazing fire, and clean swept hearth, and plenteous table spread within.”

We regret to perceive, that while Mrs. Ellis has very properly acknowledged quotations from other authors, she has taken without acknowledgment, a very striking extract from a tract by the late Dr. Ware. This omission we might have regarded as less culpable, did we not know that she acted in a similar way with Dr. Channing in her "Poetry of Life," and thus afforded us reason to suspect that she did not deem it judicious to acknowledge quotations, however excellent, from authors so heterodox.

Wisdom is the Principal Thing: a Sermon, preached at Essex-street Chapel, London, on Thursday, June 8th, 1843, being the eighteenth anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. By the Rev. HENRY MONTGOMERY, LL.D. Published at the request of the Committee. London: Printed for, and sold by the Unitarian Association, 31, St. Swithin's Lane. Sold also by John Green, 121, Newgate-street. Pp. 47, 8vo. Price 6d.

We have read reviews of this admirable discourse in several of the English Periodicals, all of which are highly complimentary, and which, generally speaking, have favoured their readers with copious extracts. We consider this discourse as a master-piece of eloquence, of which every Irishman of every communion should be proud; and we would willingly quote a few passages could we do so in justice to the highly gifted author. The Association, however, before which it was delivered, has published it at so low a price, that each of our friends may readily obtain a copy, and several of them should purchase two or more copies for distribution. Persons desirous of furnishing themselves with copies, can be supplied at the *Bible Christian* office.

The Little Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge. Vol. IV. Pp. 376. London: S. Gilbert.

We are glad to meet a fourth volume of this excellent little periodical, and to find that it is inferior to none of its predecessors in interest and valuable information. We recognise among its contents some of our favourite tales for children, interspersed with many original pieces both prose and verse, of considerable merit. Dedicated to the friends of National Education on Christian Principles, unfettered by denominational peculiarities, it is free from those sectarian sentiments, which so often render

works for the young, in other respects good, unfit for general circulation. The volume before us is got up in a plain but neat form, at a marvellously low price. It is well suited for new-year's gifts, and we are sure, that the more it is read, the better it will be for the mind and morals of the rising generation.

INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICAN SLAVERY AND BRITISH UNITARIANS.

An address from one hundred and ninety Unitarian ministers in Great Britain and Ireland, has been addressed to their brethren in the United States, on the subject of Slavery. As the address has already appeared in the *Northern Whig* and *Inquirer* Newspapers it may be sufficient to give the following extracts, which exhibit the tone and purport of the address:—

“ We have hailed from time to time the tidings of your steadfastness amidst many perils, and of your progress in the face of many difficulties. From the works which you have given to the world, often we have derived the highest benefit, and the purest light. Your names are in all our churches; and it is our joy to feel that we are united in sentiment, and are soldiers together of Christ, in the great contest which is waging between light and darkness, truth and error, evil and good, throughout the nominally civilized and Christian world. In particular, we devoutly thank the Father of lights, and Giver of every good, for the benefit to so wide a portion of mankind,—and the comfort, support, and example, afforded to ourselves,—from the intellectual glory, the Christian devotedness, and the untiring and consistent zeal, manifested in the pure life and transcendent writings of your and our departed brother,—the ever to be remembered and revered William Ellery Channing; in union with whose name, our grateful but mournful recollection, would recall that of his meek-hearted but heroic fellow-labourer, Charles Follen. Believing that the testimony of these great and good men was designed, by a merciful God, to operate on our own hearts, and stimulate us to a like course of holy doing,—we pray of you, Christian brethren, to pardon us in suggesting that, under God and the Lord Jesus, to you next we turn, in hope that the exalting influences begun or fostered by them, may be carried to their glorious consummation; and that for your honour, for our joy, and for their dear memory's sake, the voice they lifted, especially in behalf of the unhappy slave, may not be suffered to pass away without a due response from your lips, and the unshrinking and devoted support of your Christian and ministerial energies. We will not suppose, Christian brethren, that you, any more than we, can have any doubts as to the deep wrong of man holding man as a slave. We assure ourselves of your concurrence and sympathy, when we utterly deny that any human being has, or ever can have a right to make another his chattel. And believing that no example, no prescription, or time, or place, can warrant it,—we

anticipate the cordial coincidence of your desire with ours, that, on that pure form of truth,—to us so precious in our common Unitarianism,—no such stain should rest, as the extending of any countenance to so fearful an institution as that of Slavery. * * *

“We wish you to be assured, dear brethren, that while we know, or can readily conceive, the practical difficulties thrown around the question,—it were to us inestimable evidence of the energy and worth of our faith, and a title in them to our increased affection and esteem, could we behold our fellow-ministers in America, eager to embrace, and diligent in devising, *the means of overcoming those difficulties,—and sedulous in subduing the prejudices by which they are multiplied and strengthened.* * * *

“May the wisdom and spirit which are from above enable you to resolve on, and quicken you to perform, the holy work to which you are called! By the love of our dear Redeemer, by the bonds of our common faith, by the memory of the great and good, whose thrilling tones in behalf of their oppressed brother have come to us from your shores, as a voice from heaven,—we pray you be not slack or timid in aiding or urging ‘to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free.’ Let not the foulest of wrongs lift its head unrebuked in the presence of the holiest of truth. Assist us in vindicating for Unitarianism her just position among the beneficent agencies in the world. Let it be seen that the faith of One God, the Father of All, has power to unite us in unswerving efforts for the good of his children of every condition and hue. And, while praying for its efficacy on ourselves, enable us to point to those who maintain it among you, as conspicuous fellow-labourers and helpers in accomplishing that great work in the bosom of their own nation,—of striking the chains from their fellow-man, and thereby of freeing their country from an odium, Christianity from a stain, and the world from a plague, which now so heavily and deeply lie upon them. * * *

“Brethren! ‘our hearts are enlarged unto you;’ and in very love we pray, may the spirit of the Lord Jesus be with you and in you; and may it give you good consolation, and abundant understanding in this and in all things.”

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MONTREAL.

Our readers will peruse with interest the following extracts of a letter to Dr. Montgomery, giving an account of the safe arrival of our friend Mr. Cordner, in Montreal; and of the commencement of his public ministry in connexion with the Unitarian congregation of that city.

Montreal. 7th November, 1843.

“I cannot allow this day’s Mail to leave, without bearing you tidings of your friend Mr. Cordner. He arrived here on Saturday, 4th instant; and preached twice on Sunday. In the forenoon, about our usual number attended; but the tidings they spread abroad, brought an overflowing audience in the evening; our temporary chapel was crowded; and some, I believe, could not obtain admittance. The impression made by the exercises of the day is decidedly favourable.

"As far as human foresight can look a-head, the problem of establishing a Unitarian congregation in Montreal, may now be said to be solved. The next great object of my wishes, is a Mission in Canada; for this will I labour and pray. May I ask of you, as one closely connected with the education of ministers of our denomination, to bear this field of labour in mind; the time, I hope, will come, when we will call on you for a supply.

"We have purchased a lot as a site for our meeting-house (in one of the most beautiful situations our city affords), for £800, one half cash down, and one half on a credit of eighteen years. We have sold a lot off it for erecting two dwelling-houses for £350, and have still enough left for the meeting-house, consequently, we will have all our subscription except £50, to apply in building.

"Yours very sincerely,

"BENJAMIN WORKMAN.

"Rev. H. Montgomery."

LETTER FROM THE REV. J. CORDNER.

Since the foregoing intelligence was received, we have been favoured with the following extracts from a letter from Mr. Cordner, to a friend in Belfast, which we are sure will be read with lively interest. The letter is dated, *Montreal, 20th November, 1843.*

"On landing at New-York, I went to the Aster-house, where I remained for several days. * * * I found the Rev. Mr. Bellows very kind. I heard him preach, and consider him as good a preacher almost as I ever heard. He has left the old Church in Chamber-street, and holds his services at present in public rooms in Broadway. His people are building a new church, the old one being very much decayed, and out of order; and too small, moreover, for the Society, which is increasing. I also heard Dr. Dewey preach, and experienced a great deal of kindness from him too. He is one of the most affable and agreeable men I ever met with; and made himself perfectly familiar and fraternal with me. He asked me to preach in "*The Church of the Messiah*," but I declined of course. While in New-York, my object was to hear, rather than make myself heard.

"I crossed the ferry over the East River to Brooklyn, and visited the Unitarian minister there. I was gratified to find that here also they are building a very elegant new church. This edifice is called, "*The Church of the Saviour*"—which is cut on a tablet on the front; and over it is set a tolerably large and prominent figure of the Cross. If you saw it in any Irish town, you would probably take it for an exceedingly tasteful Catholic chapel. I found Mr. Farley (the minister) a very frank, amiable man. He bears the character of a very useful minister.

"On leaving New-York, I went to Boston; and remained in that city about six days. Whilst there, I was an inmate of the house of Dr. Gannett—Dr. Channing's successor—I saw a great many Unitarian ministers while in Boston, and met with much kind attention. It is quite a relief for a Unitarian from the Old World to get into Boston. Here he finds the denomination nu-

merous, intelligent, wealthy, and of great social influence. As you go through the city, and admire its many handsome churches, it is gratifying to be told of so many of them that they are Unitarian. The Federal-street church (Dr. Channing's) is not the largest in the city belonging to our denomination, nor yet the handsomest. It is a well-built edifice, with a sombre, but very comfortable interior; and would seat about nine hundred persons. The pulpit is large, but not of the modern style. I think it would hold six or seven persons comfortably. Dr. Gannett asked me to preach, but how much soever one class of feelings might prompt me to ascend the pulpit of Channing, yet I kept my resolution in Boston as well as in New-York, of hearing all I could, rather than making myself heard. In Boston alone there are *fourteen* Unitarian churches. They also abound in every village round the city—many of these are within two or three miles.

"When I left Boston, I travelled with as little delay as possible for Montreal; and, after a journey of three days, partly by railway, partly by stage-coach, and partly by steam-boat, I arrived at my destination. On landing, I found Mr. Hedge (the secretary of the congregation here) waiting to meet me. This was on Saturday. And as there was no provision made for the pulpit next day, I told the people I would preach, although, I confess, I should much rather have *sat a listener*, for the first Sunday after the termination of so long a journey as that from Newry to Montreal. The Society meets in a large room at present. I had between fifty and sixty to hear me in the morning, and about *double that number* in the evening. On the second Sunday that I preached, there were rather more in the morning, and, I think, in the evening also; and yesterday (my third Sunday), there were about seventy in the morning; whilst the evening attendance was much the same as usual. I regard the morning attendance as of more importance in a practical point of view, for they are generally persons who take an interest in our welfare; whilst the persons who come in the evening and augment the numbers so much, are, for the most part, impelled by motives of curiosity—laudable or otherwise.

"When I accepted the call of the Montreal congregation, I had made up my mind to enter upon a field of arduous labour, and I find that it is so. Still, however, there is excitement, even in the silent study, here; for as I sometimes feel wearied, I begin to consider what great results may depend on my present exertions, and am able to shake off the weariness. I labour in firm faith and strong hope of eventual success.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Simplician" on the Love of God, and the Review of "Philaethes," shall appear in our next. Several other communications have been received. A letter has been addressed to us, signed "A Unitarian," complaining of want of discipline in certain matters on the part of the Remonstrant Synod. The spirit in which the letter is written renders it inadmissible; but we shall forward it to the clerk of the Synod, if the writer instructs us to do so.

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, pre-paid) to the Rev. C. J. McAlester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. II.

FEBRUARY, 1844.

VOL. VI.

THE DOCTRINES OF OUR CHURCH.

It has been said that our denomination meet on the Lord's Day to vilify the Saviour, and that our faith is but another name for Infidelity.

Such expressions of opinion, and they are not unfrequent, on the part of our theological opponents, are calculated to raise feelings of indignation in the breast of every one to whom this despised and rejected faith is precious. But it is the duty of the Christian, in the midst of provocations, to exercise patience—to reason, instruct, persuade—and to contend, from the Scriptures, for the truth and value of his belief.

It has been sometimes alleged that our religion consists in negations—that we deny everything and affirm nothing. We do not deny everything; but we deny a great deal that is set forth in creeds, and preached up in pulpits, as the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We deny that the infinite and eternal God consists in three persons—"the same in substance, equal in power and glory:" because, while the operations of Jehovah are unlimited, we are able to trace his Unity in creation and providence; the Old Testament Scripture distinctly declares that He is One; and the same foundation truth of religion is taught by our blessed Lord. Examine the discourses of our Lord. They do not speak of a Trinity. Consider the state of the disciples' minds, at his resurrection and afterwards. There is no reason for supposing that they believed him to be God. Look into their sermons, preached to unfold the leading truths of the Gospel. There is no mention of the Saviour's deity there. A solitary text of Scripture, taken from its connexion, and literally interpreted, without reference to its context, does seem to teach that Christ is God. But we plead that the whole tenor

and language of Scripture is against it. We plead further, that the Roman Catholic Church confesses that Scripture, unaided by the Fathers, would not prove it. And then we appeal to our Protestant brethren, by the law of reason, of Scripture, and of Christian charity, no longer to upbraid us with infidelity, because we deny the doctrine of three persons in the godhead, and maintain that there is "but one God, the Father."

We deny that the Saviour's agony and death are any proof of God's anger against him as our substitute; but, on the contrary, we affirm that the presence and approval of the Father are not more conspicuous—perhaps we should say, are not so conspicuous in any other part of his life, as in this awful closing scene. Remember the voice encouraging him—the angel strengthening him—call to mind the last words, in which he commended his spirit into his Father's hands—and be satisfied that the death of our Lord showed no proof of the divine displeasure against him.

We deny, also, that God has elected a certain number of mankind to eternal life, and predestinated the rest to eternal death, without reference to their faith or practice of religion. But for this, which is the third and last negation we deem it important to notice, we surely need not offer any plea. Many who nominally profess this doctrine, practically deny it. It is the opinion of a church, not the faith of individuals. In denying it we are joined by the great majority of what may be called the Orthodox sects; and, better than this, we humbly conceive that we are sustained by the dictates of humanity and the teachings of Scripture.

So far then our religion is a system of negations. We deny the three propositions we have stated, and we are satisfied that the number of professing Christians who deny, or, at least doubt them, are neither few nor inconsiderable; more, certainly, than are dreamed of in the statistics of Calvinistic churches.

But it is a melancholy ignorance, or a more melancholy misrepresentation, that exhibits our religion as merely a negative system; for it is affirmative, as we conceive, in all that is taught by the Lord Jesus and his Apostles.

We believe that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God;"—"full of grace and truth"—"that God was

in him reconciling the world unto himself"—and that "there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." This seems to us to be the scriptural view of the Saviour's dignity; and, in contemplating it, the mind desires to forget the controversies of which it has been so often the subject, and to dwell on it as the most elevating, consoling, and sanctifying theme that could engross the human thoughts.

He must speak rashly who affirms that our faith is another name for infidelity; not only because some of the ablest apologies for the truth of Christianity which the last century produced were written by men who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity; but also because that doctrine, and the others to which we have referred, as being denied by Unitarians, are those which startle and destroy the faith of many inquiring minds, and which sometimes present the strongest obstacle to the reception of the Gospel by the Heathen or the unbeliever.

It is a great injury, also, to our Christian character, to allege that we set at nought the atonement by Jesus Christ. The teachings of Scripture on this solemn and affecting subject, are, we trust, gratefully received by our church; and they lead us to regard the death of our Lord, not as an exhibition of the Father's wrath, but as an expression of the Father's love. "In this was manifested the love of God, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." We regret, that, in opposing what has been called the vicarious atonement, expressions have been used by some, that are unworthy of a subject so solemn. If there is one topic connected with the truths of the gospel, which, above all others, should be guarded from angry controversy, and bitter discussion, this is that topic. It is calculated to subdue every cavilling scrutiny, and melt us, when we approach it, into penitence and prayer. We cordially concur in the following apposite remarks of an eminent writer on this point: "I cannot," says he, "I *cannot* discuss this solemn theme in a merely metaphysical manner. I cannot contemplate a death, and least of all, the death of the Saviour, only as a doctrine. It is to me, I must confess, altogether another kind of influence. It is to me, if it is anything, power and grandeur; it is something that visits my eye and heart; it is a theme of admiration and spiritual sympathy; it

leads me to meditation, not to metaphysics; it is ~~as~~ a majestic example, a moving testimony, a dread sacrifice, that I must contemplate it. I see in it a death-blow to sin; I hear the pleading of the crucified One for truth and salvation, beneath the darkened heavens, and amidst the shuddering earth! I mean to say that all this is spiritual and practical. It amazes me, that this great event, which is filling all lands and all ages, yea, and is to fill eternity with its presence, should be resolved altogether—all gathered and stamped into a formula of faith. It is every way astonishing to me, that such a speculative use should have been made of it; that suffering should have been seized upon as a subject for metaphysical analysis; that the agony of the Son of God should have been wrested into a thesis for the theologian; that a death should have been made a dogma; that blood should have been taken to write a creed; that Calvary should have been made the arena of controversy; that the cross, whereon Jesus, with holy candour and meekness, prayed for his enemies, saying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!"—that the cross should have been made a rack of moral torture for his friends, whereon in all the valleys, and upon all the hills of Christendom, they have been crucified by unkindness and exclusion—is there another such contradiction—is there another such phenomenon to be found, in all the strange history of the world?

We humbly conceive, that, in denying certain popular opinions which we have stated—we are but rejecting the husk, while we retain the kernel; casting away the chaff, but keeping the wheat. We believe, that what we retain is gospel truth; and it is delightful to think, as we do, that that truth is held by multitudes who bear not our name, and who have added to it commandments that have injured its simplicity, but not destroyed its power. Heartily do we long, and fervently do we pray for the time when men shall cease to revile; when they shall no longer express their love by insult and calumny, but shall realize the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

"KNOW THE LORD."

"THIS is life eternal, that they may know'these the true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." These are the words of Christ concerning the Father. And how is God to be known? Not by speculation, for "the world by wisdom knew not God." Not that he left himself without a witness among them, since he gave them rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with joy and gladness. So he testifies in one place—"That which may be known of God is manifest to them, for God hath showed it unto them; for his invisible [attributes] are clearly seen, from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made—even his eternal power and godhead." Accordingly, this is their condemnation, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. And that they might be left without excuse, the law was written in their hearts, their conscience witnessing. Seeing then that God had made himself known to them, how did the knowledge perish, according to what is said in another place—"the heathens who know not God." Even because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, he gave them up to a reprobate mind. Yet not so entirely, but that God has reserved a remnant in the worst of times. By faith, Abel, though he be dead, still speaks. Enoch had this character, that he pleased God. Noah found grace in his eyes. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness. And already the dawning of the perfect day is beheld afar off. Abraham saw that day, and was glad: to whom it was said, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

And until the promised seed should come, God was pleased to add another law, to restrain the outbreking of sin. So he severed Israel to himself from among all the nations of the earth, saying to them, "Hear, O Israel! JEHOVAH, thy God, is One God." He showed his signs and wonders also in the midst of them. He dwelt among them, even in his holy temple, and his Glory between the cherubim. He spake to them, at various times, and in various manners, by the prophets. He dealt not in the same way by any other nation, neither did they know his judgments. For to the Jews were committed

the oracles of God. But they continued not in his covenant, and it was superseded.

The bright glory was withheld from the latter temple, and the volume of prophecy was sealed up. Yet they that loved the Lord, spoke often to one another, not unremembered. As in the days of Eli, the word of the Lord was precious, there was no open vision. And those that waited for the consolation of Israel, were like men that watch for the morning,—“How long!—how long!”

Thus it was that God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Yet the darkness was not total, nor did the night last for ever. The prophecy shone as a lamp in a dark place.

The time draws near. And now all the signs fall thicker; and solemn expectation, through all the regions of the East, observes the mountains of Israel.

Behold! the day-star rising.—How beautiful upon the mountains! It is not now,—“if haply they may feel after and find him.” Nor that one should say,—“He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.” *Seen* him hath no man at any time; the only-begotten Son, he who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed him. Henceforth we know him, and have seen him:—the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ;—whom not having seen, we love; in whom, though *now* we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice. And this is sufficient for us, until he shall appear, and we see him as he is.

God is known not by logic, or the phrases of the schoolmen. What does it avail disputing about the essence and personality of Deity, things to which human reason is incompetent to reach. It is vain, therefore, seeking to be wise above what is told in Scripture. It is *more* than *vain*, as often as such questions minister occasion for strifes, divisions, ensnaring subtilties, arrogant opinions, and presumptuous judgments. This is not wisdom from above. That is first pure, then peaceable.

Therefore, “make not thyself overwise, why shouldst thou destroy thyself.” Have ye not been witnesses how “he takes the wise in their own subtilty.” Strive not, but rather pray. For it is the spirit of God that searches all things, even the deep things of God. And will not He, our heavenly Father, give the holy spirit to those

that ask him? He that will look into things too high for him, has need verily to be clothed with humility. We have this warning, that in the word written, are things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own perdition. But we know that if any man desires to do his will, he shall know whether the doctrine be of God. Nay, he has promised, "I will put my laws in their hearts, and write them on their minds;" and, "All shall know me, from the least even to the greatest."

God is Infinite, we cannot define him. Yet he dwells with the man of a contrite and humble spirit, and in those that love. We cannot dive into the secret counsels of the Most High. But we are sure that he desires all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, And we may attain to a good hope through grace. His person we neither have seen, nor can conceive. But has not he shined in our hearts to give the knowledge of his glory in the person of Jesus Christ? We see as in a glass dimly. We cannot comprehend the nature of God. But we thirst to be made partakers of the divine nature;—that is, of his holiness,—blessed are such, for they shall see God;—of his love,—behold the more excellent way!

"If any one love God, this man is known of him." Thus may we say, we know God, or, rather, are known of him. And the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by his spirit which he has given us. Let us cherish this love. Let us not provoke the spirit of God by corrupt conversation. Let us stir up the gift that is in us. Let us not forget all his benefits. How he has borne with us, and spared us; with all a mother's tenderness, and more than a father's providence,—led us by the hand, and carried us in his bosom; taught us and corrected us, as we were able to bear; raised us up from sickness, comforted us in all our afflictions, and whispered peace to our wounded spirits. "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication." Shall not we remember him on our beds, and meditate on him in the night watches! Are not the thoughts of him precious to us; and, oh! who can number them! Let us contemplate him in his grace. We love him because he first loved us. May we not content ourselves with passing emotions, or high-strained transports! Let us dwell on

this love; let it fill—embrace us. Let us take it in, with all its broad contrast of light and shade, as it respects God and ourselves. May we love, so to conceive of it, even as God commends it to us. And, oh! may we not deceive our own hearts, taking up with the form of knowledge, without the love that edifies,—light dissevered from warmth. Let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. So may we approve ourselves, before men, the disciples of Christ, by the love we bear to one another; but much more, may we thus assure our hearts before him. And who shall part us from the love of God, that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

SIMPLICIAN.

POPULAR OPPOSITION TO TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

THE most usual form, perhaps, which opposition to the cause of Teetotalism assumes, is that of ridicule and jest. Many are accustomed to laugh at those who are its zealous advocates, as if they were a little fanatic. Ask them to embrace it; and they will answer with a sarcasm. Speak of its importance; and they will mock or banter, as if it were a mere popular delusion. Nor is it without reason that its opponents adopt this line of conduct. It is much easier to laugh than to find a valid reason for their opposition. A jest is a good substitute for lack of argument.

Unhappily, too, it is with multitudes more powerful than argument. A jest will have more influence on many minds than the most conclusive reasoning; because, *men dread ridicule more than they love truth*. This, it must be confessed, is a lamentable fact. To think that man, endowed with reason, designed for immortality, and expecting hereafter to be judged for his conduct, should allow the taunts of his fellow-man to influence him more than his own conscientious convictions of truth and duty, is a most melancholy view of the weakness of humanity; and is only less lamentable than the conduct of those who, forgetting their solemn responsibility to their Maker and their fellow-man, contrive to stifle the dictates of conscience in their own breast by a vain unreasoning merriment. Temperance is either a virtue, or it is not.—Drunkenness is either a crime, or it is not. If not, let

teetotallers be laughed at, ridiculed, bantered, with all the powers of wit and raillery that their opponents can command, when inspired with the juice of John Barley-corn or the grape. But if it be a crime, expressly condemned by the law of heaven—a crime of such magnitude as to endanger man's salvation—then no means devised to put a stop to it can be a fit subject for raillery, at least for any *Christian*. God's law is surely not given to be thus trifled with by his creatures; nor is a breach of his commandments a fit subject for a jest.

But another form which this hostility assumes, is a hasty impatience with what is called teetotallers' unreasonableness. When driven from their mirth, it is not unusual for the opponents of total abstinence to lose their patience. To the reasonings of its advocates they reply with the exclamations, "Absurd!" "Preposterous!"—Failing in argument, they have recourse to invective. Or, resolved to adhere to the wine-cup or the glass, they will not give ear to arguments that might possibly disturb their self-satisfied equanimity. This is in one respect well; as such conduct betrays some remaining qualms of conscience. We are only impatient with that which pains us. We will only refuse to hear that which is disagreeable to us. And of all subjects displeasing to us, that is most so, which makes us dissatisfied with ourselves—that especially which alarms the conscience. Impatience, however, is a poor palliative, and though it may silence the voice of friendship, cannot eventually hush that of conscience.

But the true cause of all this opposition is in reality an undue love of self—whatever its outward expression, it springs merely from a disposition to self-indulgence. I do not say that that indulgence has been carried to a criminal extent—in most cases it has not; though it might be well to consider, where the improvement and happiness of society are concerned, whether this very selfish refusal to co-operate in the movement be not itself criminal.—Men say that they do not wish to bind themselves; that is, they prefer to enjoy their liberty to take, if they please, a glass of wine or spirits, to the benevolent object of assisting in improving their brethren in society! Their own gratification they consider of more consequence than the promotion of this righteous purpose! To indulge their

appetite, they consider of greater moment than either to promote virtue, or to banish a most degrading vice! Is not such a motive pre-eminently selfish? Is it worthy of a Christian? Is it worthy even of a true lover of his species?

Let us for a moment examine these questions. Jesus Christ, when he was on earth, required his disciples to renounce all and follow him. The rich man was to part with his possessions, rather than to permit these to lead him to deny his Saviour, or renounce his faith in the gospel of Christ. The fishermen were to give up their nets at his bidding, and to become with him the fishers of men. The poor were to surrender the dearest ties of home and family, rather than allow these to deprive them of the true riches of Jesus Christ. And however great the sacrifice, it was actually made. "Lo," says Peter, "we have left all, and have followed thee." How many of his disciples would *now* make this sacrifice, when they will not give up the merest self-indulgence for a great Christian purpose? How few even would make it for their own safety? They are told, and must admit, that a great spiritual danger lurks in the wine-cup—one, in fact, equivalent to a rejection of Christ. In such case Christ commands us to cut it off, though dear to us as a right hand; to pluck it out, though it were the apple of our eye, rather than suffer it to cause us to offend. How do such Christians obey the precept? They do not obey it at all. They retort on those who would have them do so, with a cavil or a jest! But still they profess to be good Christians—good *disciples* of Jesus Christ! Further, they too are great lovers of their species. They have hearts filled with affection for the whole of humanity. Ask them to manifest it by setting an example of temperance—to make one little sacrifice of their own unnecessary pleasures on the altar of benevolence. Not they, forsooth: but yet these are good Christians, and would be most indignant to be esteemed anything but good *disciples* of Jesus Christ!

J. O.

A NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ON CIVILIZED PRACTICES AND OPINIONS.

ON an occasion when I had interrogated a Sioux chief on the Upper Missouri, about their government, their punishment and tortures of prisoners, and had freely condemned them for the cruelty of the practice, he took occasion, when I had got through, to ask *me* some questions relative to modes in the civilized world, which, with his comments upon them, were nearly as follow; and struck me, as I think they must every one, with great force.

He told me he had often heard that white people hung their criminals by the neck, and choked them to death, and those their own people; to which I answered, "Yes." He then told me he had learned that they shut each other up in prisons, where they keep them a great part of their lives, *because they can't pay money!* I replied in the affirmative to this, which occasioned great surprise and excessive laughter, even among the women. He told me that he had been to our Fort, at Council Bluffs, where we had a great many warriors and braves, and he saw three of them taken out on the prairies, and tied to a post, and whipped almost to death, and he had been told they submit to all this to get a little money. "Yes." He had been along the frontier, and a good deal among white people, and he had seen them whip their little children—a thing that is very cruel—he had heard also from several white *medicine men*, that the Great Spirit of the white people was the child of a white woman, and that he was at last put to death by the white people! This seemed a thing that he had not been able to comprehend, and he concluded by saying, "The Indians' 'Great Spirit' got no mother—the Indians no kill him, **HE NEVER DIE.**" He put me a chapter of other questions, as to the trespasses of the white people on their lands—their continual corruption of the morals of their women, and digging open the Indians' graves to get their bones, &c. To all of which I was obliged to reply in the affirmative; and quite glad to close my note-book, and quietly to escape from the throng that had gathered round me, and saying (though to myself and silently), that these and an hundred other vices belong to the civilized world, and are practised upon (but certainly in no instance reciprocated by) the "cruel and relentless savage." — *Catlin's North American Indians.*

THE WRITINGS OF THE LATE DR. H. WARE, JUN.

A BRIEF notice of the writings of the late Dr. Ware may form an appropriate sequel to the sketch of his life contained in our last number. To most of those in these countries, who loved his name and who revere his memory, he is known only by his writings; but these have been so popular, so instructive, and, in the main, so spiritualizing, that they have caused us to mourn his death as the removal of one of the most zealous, devoted, and apostolic ministers of our church. He was not gifted with brilliant talents, nor was he thrown into any of those extraordinary scenes of life which sometimes give to character an adventitious celebrity. His journey was through the "vale" of life, and he seemed rather to retire from the public view than to push himself into notice. The great business of his life appears to have been to cultivate the Christian graces in his own heart, and to labour assiduously, by all the means in his power, to foster them in the hearts of others. Diligence in mental and bodily labours, meekness amidst the turmoils of life, and the storms of political and religious partisanship, and a fervent piety towards God, and unfaltering faith in Christ, were the distinguishing features of his character.

Dr. Ware was a Unitarian from conviction, and felt the liveliest interest in the progress of Unitarian views, because he believed that the Calvinism prevalent in New England had tended greatly to produce Infidelity; and that the views of God's paternal government, which Unitarianism, as he understood it, exhibits, tends most effectually to promote benevolent feelings, and philanthropic labours. "Yet was he," says one who knew him intimately, "free from all dogmatism, bigotry, and extravagance; no one could be more tender to the feelings of those who differed from him, or more just to a system which he rejected. Hence, I believe, he never gave offence to any whose errors he exposed, and, therefore, probably made more converts, while he made no enemies. He was not a Secedarian, but a Christian, and he valued Christianity for its renewing and sanctifying influence, rather than for any theological statements which it covers. He sought to make men understand Christ, that they might honour him. He strove to unfold the true character of religion, that they might embrace and obey it." We find that the tenor.

and object of his writings completely harmonize with this view of his character. In all he has written we find scarcely anything controversial, but everything practical. Perhaps the only work, with the exception of two or three small tracts, that might be regarded as touching much on controversy, is his *Discourses on the Character and Offices of the Saviour*—a volume which considers Christ in the various relations in which he stands to human beings—but even this volume, important as it is in a theological point of view, and on this account deserving of a wide circulation, is perhaps more valuable for the sweet lessons of piety, and the fervent spirit of devotion, which it breathes.

The work by which we know Dr. Ware best, and which is destined, with the blessing of God, to accomplish the greatest good to his own denomination, and to the world, is his treatise on the *Formation of the Christian Character*. It was undertaken at a time when, from ill health, he was compelled to retire from his pastoral duties, and was principally written, we believe, while travelling in Europe.—This circumstance strikingly illustrates that diligence and zeal by which he was distinguished. No longer able to preach, withdrawn from the active labours of a pastor's office, and depressed by ill health, he composed, at the various places where he stopped to rest himself, a work which contains a mine of practical wisdom, and which has been read with profit by the aged as well as the young in every rank of life.

This valuable work is addressed to those who are seeking to lead a religious life; it first explains the nature of religion, and argues that we have the power to obtain religious impressions; it then exhibits the means of religious improvement, under the several heads of reading, meditation, prayer, preaching, and the Lord's Supper, and closes with a most valuable chapter on the religious discipline of life. This work has gone through twelve editions in New England, and several in London, Liverpool, and Birmingham. We trust we shall soon see it, by the exertions of our Tract Society, brought out at a lower price, that ministers, and others interested in the growth of religious feeling, may have an opportunity of circulating it more and more widely.

“*The Life of the Saviour*” has a place in all our Sun-

day-school libraries, and is read with delight by the teacher and the pupil. It brings us in fancy to the scene of the Saviour's toils and sufferings, teachings and miracles. The graphic sketch which it gives of the leading incidents of the gospel, the happy illustrations of the evangelists' language, and the light which it casts on the manners and customs of the country, and on its physical condition, show how familiar the writer must have been with the life of his Lord, and render it a simple and beautiful commentary on that portion of the Holy Scriptures.

Dr. Ware published nearly twenty years ago a small treatise on extemporaneous preaching, from which we gave copious extracts in the *Bible Christian* for 1837, page 164. This work, from the subject of which it treats, has not obtained an extensive circulation, but we are gratified, in turning to the *North American Review*, vol. ix. page 300, to find a most flattering notice of it. "It bears throughout," says the reviewer, "the marks of thought, of candour, of reflection. The perusal of it by any person can hardly fail to have a good effect, to operate as a confirmation of good purposes, and an excitement to greater diligence."

With the interesting tale of Jotham Anderson all our readers are familiar, and the true and cheering views of religion which are interwoven with that delightful sketch, are calculated to dispel the gloomy thoughts which the gospel, misunderstood, is apt to induce, and to lead the reader to regard the ways of Wisdom as pleasantness and peace.

Although Dr. Ware did not seek publicity, nor throw himself unnecessarily into the agitating questions which were canvassed in his day, he fearlessly opposed every practice which he believed to be opposed to the principles of the gospel; and gave the weight of his character and his pen to all efforts for the moral and religious improvement of society. Hence we find him taking a Christian stand against the murderous, but still fashionable and honourable practice of duelling—a practice which is as clearly and plainly opposed to the commandments of God, as is the crime of the midnight assassin—a practice which has been handed down to us from those dark ages when single combat determined the right, as juries now decide it—and a practice which should, ere this, have been suppressed

by Christian legislation, or pronounced disgraceful and criminal by the voice of an enlightened public opinion.— A sermon on this subject by Dr. Ware, occasioned by a fatal duel which took place in 1838, presents this shameful custom in its true light, and must have produced a strong impression in New England. We would like to see that sermon reprinted in these countries, and the subject agitated, as it becomes Christians to agitate it, till it shall exist only in the records of the past.

Dr. Ware contemplated, in Christian faith, the reign of universal peace, and laboured to expose the sinfulness of war, not forgetting, however, in the warmth of his zeal, that moderation and meekness which even the friends of Peace principles have sometimes violated. His discourse on the Promise of Universal Peace is one of the most beautiful productions of his pen. But to none of the moral and philanthropic institutions of our day did he give heartier or more efficient aid than to the cause of temperance—of temperance, in the first place, as it was understood and advocated in America, and as it was introduced into Ulster by Dr. Edgar, but afterwards of temperance, as time and experience unfolded its truer principles, under the homely but significant name of Teetotalism. His address to the students of Harvard College, on the moral principles of the Temperance movement, which appeared in the *Bible Christian* for 1842, page 302, is one of the most powerful and pathetic appeals which have been made to the thinking and Christian public on this momentous question. Dr. Ware possessed considerable poetic genius; and if we cannot trace much of the poet in his prose compositions, we must attribute it, not to the want of ability, but to his desire, in writing on the serious subjects that engaged his attention, to bring them before his readers with the greatest plainness and simplicity. The Vision of Liberty has been regarded as his best effort in verse; but its great popularity may be perhaps attributed to the exciting occasion on which it was written—we allude to the visit of Lafayette to the United States in 1824. We give, in another part of the present number, lengthened extracts from one of his poems, the *Ursa Major*, which is full of poetic beauties, and which may satisfy us that, if Dr. Ware had given his mind to such compositions, he would have held an honourable place among American poets.

Space will not permit us to notice, as we would desire, other productions of this good man. We fondly hope that a people's edition of his works may soon issue from the Irish press, uniform with the edition of Channing's works that has already appeared. A single volume, and that not very large, might contain all that he has written, including several interesting biographical sketches of Priestley, Fenelon, and others, and the various sermons, tracts, and reviews, which have appeared from his pen.—We cannot but regret that one who wrote so well had not been spared to write more; for we learn, that his mind, ever diligent, was occupied during the last year of his life in preparing to publish other works. Yet let us be thankful for what he has done—and rejoice, that, in his life, and character, and writings, we have so beautiful an exhibition of the power of Christianity as interpreted by our Church.

SELECTED POETRY.

TO THE URSA MAJOR.

BY HENRY WARE, JUN.

WITH what a stately and majestic step
 That glorious constellation of the north
 Treads its eternal circle! going forth
 Its princely way among the stars in slow
 And silent brightness. Mighty one, all hail!
 I joy to see thee on thy glowing path
 Walk, like some stout and girded giant; stern,
 Unwearied, resolute, whose toiling foot
 Disdains to loiter on its destined way.
 The other tribes forsake their midnight track,
 And rest their weary orbs beneath the wave;
 But thou dost never close thy burning eye,
 Nor stay thy steadfast step. But on, still on,
 While systems change, and suns retire, and worlds
 Slumber and wake, thy ceaseless march proceeds.
 The near horizon tempts to rest in vain.
 Thou, faithful sentinel, dost never quit
 Thy long appointed watch; but, sleepless still,

Dost guard the fix'd light of the universe,
 And bid the north for ever know its place.
 Ages have witness'd thy devoted trust,
 Unchanged, unchanging. When the sons of God
 Sent forth that shout of joy which rang through heaven,
 And echoed from the outer spheres that bound
 The illimitable universe, thy voice
 Join'd the high chorus; from thy radiant orbs
 The glad cry sounded, swelling to His praise,
 Who thus had cast another sparkling gem,
 Little, but beautiful, amid the crowd
 Of splendours that enrich his firmament.
 As thou art now, so wast thou then, the same.
 Ages have roll'd their course, and time grows gray;
 The earth has gather'd to her womb again,
 And, yet again, the myriads that were born
 Of her uncounted, unremember'd tribes.
 The seas have changed their beds; the eternal hills
 Have stoop'd with age; the solid continents
 Have left their banks; and man's imperial works—
 The toil, pride, strength of kingdoms, which had sung
 Their haughty honours in the face of heaven,
 As if immortal—have been swept away:
 Shatter'd and mouldering, buried and forgot.
 But time has shed no dimness on thy front,
 Nor touch'd the firmness of thy tread; youth, strength,
 And beauty still are thine; as clear, as bright,
 As when the Almighty Former sent thee forth.
 Beautiful offspring of his curious skill,
 To watch earth's northern beacon, and proclaim
 The eternal chorus of eternal Love.

I wonder as I gaze. That stream of light,
 Undimm'd, unquench'd—just as I see it now—
 Has issued from those dazzling points through years
 That go back far into eternity.
 Exhaustless flood! for ever spent, renew'd
 For ever! Yea, and those refulgent drops,
 Which now descend upon my lifted eye,
 Left their far fountain twice three years ago.
 While those winged particles, whose speed outstrips

The flight of thought, were on their way, the earth
 Compass'd its tedious circuit round and round,
 And, in the extremes of annual change, beheld
 Six autumns fade, six springs renew their bloom.
 So far from earth those mighty orbs revolve!
 So vast the void through which their beams descend!

* * * From the profound of heaven,

Untravell'd even in thought, keen, piercing rays
 Dart through the void, revealing to the sense
 Systems and worlds unnumber'd. Take the glass
 And search the skies. The opening skies pour down
 Upon your gaze thick showers of sparkling fire.
 And these are suns! vast, central, living fires,
 Lords of dependant systems, kings of worlds
 That wait as satellites upon their power,
 And flourish in their smile. Awake, my soul,
 And meditate the wonder! Countless suns
 Blaze round thee, leading forth their countless worlds!
 Worlds in whose bosoms living things rejoice,
 And drink the bliss of being from the fount
 Of all-pervading Love. What mind can know,
 What tongue can utter, all their multitudes!
 Thus numberless in numberless abodes!
 Known but to thee, bless'd Father! Thine they are,
 Thy children, and thy care; and none o'erlooked
 Of thee! No, not the humblest soul that dwells
 Upon the humblest globe, which wheels its course
 Amid the giant glories of the sky,
 Like the mean mote that dances in the beam
 Among the mirror'd lamps, which fling
 Their wasteful splendour from the palace wall,
 None, none escape the kindness of thy care;
 All compass'd underneath thy spacious wing,
 Each fed and guided by thy powerful hand.

Tell me, ye splendid orbs! as from your throne
 Ye mark the rolling provinces that own
 Your sway, what beings fill those bright abodes?
 How form'd, how gifted? what their powers, their state,
 Their happiness, their wisdom? Do they bear
 The stamp of human nature? Or has God

Peopled those purer realms with lovelier forms
And more celestial minds? Does Innocence
Still wear her native and untainted bloom?
Or has Sin breathed his deadly blight abroad,
And sow'd corruption in those fairy bowers?
Has War trod o'er them with his foot of fire?
And Slavery forged his chains; and Wrath, and Hate,
And sordid Selfishness, and cruel Lust,
Leagued their base bands to tread out light and truth,
And scatter'd wo where heaven had planted joy?
Or are they yet all paradise, unfallen
And uncorrupt; existence one long joy,
Without disease upon the frame, or sin
Upon the heart, or weariness of life;
Hope never quench'd, and age unknown,
And death unfeared; while fresh and fadeless youth
Glows in the light from God's near throne of love?

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

THE HARD LESSON—THE TEXT NOT APPLIED.

SOME kind friend gave little Janie a text-book; it was bound in red morocco, and had gilt leaves: Janie was very much pleased with it, and promised her mamma she would say a text out of it every morning: one day her text happened to be the following: "Behold we count them happy which endure: ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Janie said it very perfectly, and her mamma spoke to her about the meaning of it, that we ought to bear patiently with everything, being assured that God loves us, and has ordered everything for our good. Janie stood still while her mamma was speaking to her, but she paid no attention to her words, for she was watching the sparrows hopping about on the garden walk before the window, and the instant her mamma had finished, she asked permission to throw out the crumbs to them.

After breakfast, Janie began to learn her lessons; she was an affectionate child who loved her mamma, and could not bear to be in disgrace; therefore as she was not parti-

cularly idle, her lessons were generally well learnt, and her duties discharged in proper time. This morning everything went on as well as usual; the copy was neatly written, the music practised, and more than all, the sum was right: the lessons were all said, except one, of which Janie said she did not know how much to learn; the truth was, it was a lesson Janie did not at all like, and she secretly hoped that her mamma would give her a very small piece; instead of this, however, her mamma gave her nearly twice as much as she expected, which made Janie so angry, that she did not even attempt to learn it, but sat pouting over her book. It was a lesson in the English Grammar; her mamma saw how much her little girl was out of temper, and endeavoured to convince her of her fault, and advised her to learn the lesson. Half an hour passed away, and at last her mamma said, "Janie, if you can say that lesson, we will go for our walk;" it was a fine frosty morning in winter, and Janie thought she should like to go out; so although she had scarcely looked at the lesson, she brought the book to her mamma to try and say it: after getting over a line or two she stopped and then proceeded, "the masculine gender denotes a kind of an animal as a man, a duck, a hen." Her mamma felt inclined to smile, but she checked herself, for she knew that though what Janie said seemed very ridiculous to her, yet her little girl, by the temper she had been indulging, had committed a great sin in the sight of God, so she gave her back the book, and left her to learn her lesson. But did Janie learn it? No sooner had her mamma shut the door, than she flung the book on the table, and burst into a fit of tears—*tears of passion, not tears of sorrow*. Dinner-time came: after dinner some ladies called to see her mamma; Janie could not go and play for she had not said her lesson: all that long miserable afternoon she sat with her elbows on the table, and her head on her hands, bewailing her unhappy condition. Tea-time came: but it brought no alleviation to Janie's sorrow, for she had not yet attempted to learn her lesson. After tea her mamma took out her blotting book, and began to write: there was a fire blazing cheerfully in the grate, the lamp was lighted, and the window-curtains drawn, so that the room looked warm and comfortable: on a stool at her mamma's feet, sat Janie's sister, a very

little child, who could not yet speak plainly, and she used to make such funny sounds, in trying to say the words she was taught, that her brothers and sisters called her Coo. Coo was very happy just then with a pencil and piece of paper, which her mamma had given her to keep her quiet, whilst she was busy: and what was Janie about? Nothing, absolutely nothing! She stood leaning against the table with her book open before her, and a few large tears coursing each other silently down her cheeks. Her mamma felt very sorry for her little girl, so she left off her writing, and tried once more to convince her of her fault. "Now Janie," she said, "look at that lesson, and tell me how long you think it would have taken you to have learnt it, if you had really tried to do so?"

Janie did not answer at first, but when her mamma repeated the question, she said, "she thought about half an hour."

"And how many hours have you spent over it? One, two, three, four! and have you not been very unhappy during those four hours?"

Janie confessed she had.

"All those four hours of unhappiness you drew down upon yourself, by refusing to submit to what was a little disagreeable to you; you did not like to learn the lesson I gave you; but which was the worst, the trouble it would have given you for half an hour, or the four hours you have spent over your book?"

Janie, who had in some measure recovered her good humour, was decidedly of opinion the four hours were the worst. "Especially," said her mamma, "when you consider that the lesson has still to be learnt. And now will you tell me what use the text* you learnt in the morning has been to you during the day? or rather will you tell me what use it ought to have been to you?"

"I suppose, mamma, you mean I ought to have been more patient, but I don't see what that has to do with learning lessons?"

"It has this to do with it; we always have something to do, or to bear with, which is disagreeable to us, and by being impatient under it, or rebelling against it, we only increase our own unhappiness: you have had a hard lesson

* See beginning.

to-day, but had you learnt it immediately, you would have spared yourself four hours of vexation. You will always have hard lessons of some kind or other. I have them myself very often." Janie looked incredulous. "Yes, Janie, it is very true: by a 'hard lesson' I mean anything which is disagreeable or painful to us; patience, and an earnest endeavour to do our duty, under such circumstances, will always save us from much sorrow." Janie looked as though she thought, that if 'hard lessons' were not to be escaped, even when she was as old as her mamma, it was a sad case indeed.

By this time little Coo, who had climbed up on her mamma's lap, had just completed three or four mysterious lines of writing, by guiding her mamma's hand along the paper. "Can you read that, Janie?" said her mamma, pointing to it.

"No, mamma, of course not," said Janie, "it is nonsense. Coo can't write."

"Just so, my child, would it be if we had the direction of our own circumstances. Little Coo sees no difference between her writing and mine; provided the strokes go up and down, whether they make letters or not, it is all equally unknown to her; so it is with us in the affairs of this world, we should not know how to direct ourselves, even if we were permitted to do so: but our concerns are ordered by God, and in all that happens to us He has an end in view; that is to say, something which is to be brought about by it, some good which it is to do us, although we may not understand it; we ought therefore always to submit patiently to everything, whether it is pleasant to us or not, and never to rebel against his will, either in trifling or in important events: when you are a woman, therefore, expect to meet with the 'hard lessons' I have told you of, and never murmur, or repine against them."

Whether Janie remembered this conversation with her mamma or not, I cannot tell, but probably she dried her tears, learnt her lesson quickly, and went to play with her little sister for the rest of the evening.

Now do you not think Janie would have been a happier, as well as a better child, had she thought during the day of the text she learnt in the morning? And are there not many children who learn their texts, and read their

Bible in the same careless manner! just as a parrot will say, "How do you do?" and, "What's o'clock," without knowing the meaning of the words it utters.—*From Mrs. Barber's "Childhood's Duties."*

SUNDAY-SCHOOL ADDRESS, BY MR. G. M'ADAM.

[The following Farewell Address to the children attending the Sunday School in connexion with the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, was delivered by Mr. George M'Adam, for several years a superintendent of the school, on December 31st, 1843.]

YOU have, I suppose, all heard that I am about to leave Belfast and reside at some distance, and that this is the last Sunday I can be among you as superintendent. It is but natural and right that I should, upon this occasion, wish to say a few words at parting with you all.

I assure you, my young friends, it grieves me not a little to be obliged to leave you. It has been truly said, that we often do not know the full value of what we enjoy, until, by some unexpected circumstance, we lose it: thus, it is said, we seldom think how great is the blessing of health, until we are laid on the bed of sickness; and I may tell you, that I did not know how much I should feel the present separation, until the time has come when I find I must leave you. When my mind travels back over the long term of my connexion with this school, and when I think of the many pleasant hours we have spent together during a period of six years, it is not any wonder I should feel sorry at parting with you. There are many among you with whose faces I have been familiar since the opening of the school, and I look upon you all as friends whom I have met in this room, Sunday after Sunday, for a great length of time. We have met together for mutual improvement, to learn truth, meekness, charity, and love towards one another, and I hope we *have* learned many valuable lessons. I hope we have all learned the value of *truth*, that, not only is "a lying tongue an abomination to the Lord," but that truth and honesty, in all our dealings with our fellow-creatures in this world, is the only true wisdom, and the only course by which man or woman can succeed, or be contented and happy. Another lesson, and one of vast importance, my young friends, I do trust you

learn here; it is *kindness*—kindness to one another—kindness to every one you meet. There is not one among you who has not some one below him—some one above him; not one of you who has not got it in his or her power to be kind or unkind to some one. *Be kind to all*; and, believe me, you cannot learn a better lesson than to control your passions, so as to avoid hurting the feelings of the humblest of your fellow-creatures. Mrs. Hannah More, a poetess, a lady who was benevolence itself, says truly,

“A small unkindness is a great offence.”

I trust you will always be most guarded not to commit such an offence. *Kindness* is that lovely virtue which it was the object of our blessed Saviour to teach. He called it *love*—love to God and love to man. “Above all things,” he said to his disciples, “I charge you to *love* one another.” You owe a higher love to God, which consists in obedience to his commandments; but remember *this*, children,—there is no other way in which you can please God more than in doing good to your fellow-creatures.

How thankful we should all feel that our lot has been cast in a land where education can be easily obtained by all who wish to learn; and I hope all *do* wish to learn, from the highest to the lowest amongst us. Believe me, children, the best fortune any of you can have is a good education. Those who stay away from school little think what they lose; they do not imagine what a blessing they are pushing away from them. You cannot understand, at your age, the great importance—the unspeakable benefit—of early education; but you are all growing up to be men and women, and, if your lives are spared, you will fill various situations in life, all of them having certain duties connected with them: there is no situation, I can assure you, in which you will not find the great advantage of education. The religious and moral training you receive in a Sunday School is especially adapted to be of service to you in after life. It will show you your duty more clearly—it will point out your errors and deficiencies—it will teach you moderation in success—it will cheer and gladden your heart when oppressed with trouble. I hope you *feel* the great privilege you enjoy in coming here week after week. You cannot value it too highly, and indeed you do not now think of it, but you will here—

after; and you will feel very thankful for the opportunity that this school afforded you of being brought early to the knowledge of that great and merciful God, who has formed all we see and know, and who supports and guides all by his unerring wisdom and unbounded power. I hope your coming here leads you often to think of your heavenly Father, who has given you so many kind friends, and who showers blessings in such abundance on your heads. Think of the poor negro, the Indian savage, without a book, without learning of any kind, without a bible, without knowing how to pray to God; and, when you compare your lot with his, think how thankful indeed you ought to be. And how should you show your thankfulness? Why, by using all the opportunities you have for improvement; by coming here regularly; and, when you come, by being attentive to your teachers, gentle towards your companions, kind to all; by using your best exertions to learn and to understand the beautiful truths of the Gospel, and in this way every day leaving the room wiser and better than you entered it. Be determined to learn, strive always to do good, and always as *much* good as you can; and, be assured, God will bless your endeavours, and give you a happy and contented mind—a good conscience, which is the greatest blessing you can have. And never be afraid, my young friends, to ask questions of your teachers. You will always find them ready and willing to answer, and you cannot please them more than by showing your interest in this way in what you are learning. Never think that your teachers are indifferent to your thoughts and feelings, and do not suppose that, although they do not talk with you as much as you would sometimes like, that they do not therefore *think* of you and feel a pride in your progress. Your teachers take the trouble of coming here to meet you every Sunday, often at great inconvenience to themselves; and this should show you how warm an interest they take in your welfare. Prove to them, my young friends, that you can value their kindness, by coming regularly and behaving well.

Now that I am about to leave you, I will tell you what I think of you. I think, then, that you are a very good, orderly set of children, and that, while there are very few among you whose conduct I have had reason to chide, there are many of you who have behaved so well as to

merit the marked approbation of your teachers. During the time I have been superintendent, I have had great reason to feel much pleased with the good order, attention, and obedience shown by you; and, I am happy to say, strangers also have remarked the regularity of our school. I may now tell you that there have been both boys and girls in this Sunday School, who have been taken on the recommendation of their teachers and placed in respectable situations, which, I am glad to find, they fill well and faithfully. Now, it was the good conduct of these boys and girls which obtained for them the notice of their teachers; and you should *every one* remember, that, although you may not suppose it, you are *all* narrowly watched both by your teachers and superintendents, and they, in their own minds, form an opinion of you from your conduct. Now every good boy or girl, who *wishes* to do *right*, *can* do it, and is *sure* to be found out and rewarded; and *never forget*, children, that there are hundreds in your rank in life who have nothing but a good character to bring them on in the world; and, believe me, to earn this is far better than to learn how to hoard heaps of money. Be all of you, then, good, attentive, and kind, for you cannot tell the day or the hour you may be picked out, and placed in a comfortable situation, as others have been before you. I have often regretted, my young friends, that my business occupied me so much that I could not command time to become more intimate with you all; but I know enough of you to make me feel vexed at parting with you, and I hope you have known enough of me to make you sometimes think of me when I am gone. While amongst you I have always tried to be patient, considerate, and attentive to your wants and wishes, and I trust that, during the entire time of my being here, not one of you has had cause to complain of any act of unkindness from me. If ever I offended you by word or deed, believe me it was not intended. I ever wished to be kind, and just, and fair among you. It was always my wish to gain your good opinion, and to be liked by you. How far I have succeeded I cannot tell; but, if I *have* been liked by you, and you wish to please me now, I shall tell you how you can do it. Just come here *regularly every Sunday*. Let no idle excuse keep you away; but come wet or dry. Come every Sunday. Come deter-

mined to learn—determined to learn what is good, and right, and true, and just. Remember that every Sunday you spend here may be—is worth years of peace and comfort to you in after life. Every little seed of learning you here obtain will, like the mustard seed which you read of in your bibles, spring up into a great tree of knowledge and of happiness. I do not expect to be very far from you, and I hope occasionally to visit you; but, even when not among you, I shall still see, in my mind's eye, these forms filled with good, orderly, well-behaved boys and girls, and it will give me great pleasure to picture to myself how many come here Sunday after Sunday, and go home *better* than they were before. Do not suppose, my young friends, that you shall be without another superintendent in my place. I expect that my part of the management will soon be taken up by a gentleman who has more time and more ability to devote to it, and who will assist your good friend, Mr. Cunningham, better than I have been able to do. I hope to see a large and flourishing Sunday School under their joint management.

To you all I wish a merry and a happy New Year, and many returns of a season so full of hope and joy to thousands of our fellow-creatures.

REVIEW.

The Truth divested of Mystery; or, the Scriptures Scripturally Unfolded relative to the First Principles of Truth. By PHILALETHES. London: John Mardon, Farringdon-street. Pp. 299, 12mo.

THIS is a valuable addition to the Unitarian literature of the day. The writer is one who has carefully studied his Bible, and has brought its varied expression very happily to illustrate and explain itself. To divest Scriptural truth of the mystery of man's creating is the object which the writer proposes to accomplish, and certain we are, that, as in the works and providence of God, so in his word, the best commentary ever written will be obtained from themselves. But we shall allow the author here to speak for himself.

“There may be others who think that we ought not at all to treat concerning any of these matters, because they are *mysterious*. By which, if they mean that, so far as the words of God are mye-

terious, we ought to acquiesce in them implicitly, and not presume to be wise above what is written, we cordially coincide. But, if they mean that the words of men are mysterious, and that we must not reason concerning them, nor inquire whether or no, and in what sense, they are agreeable to the word of God, we dissent most decidedly. What is this but substituting another mystery instead of the true one, and paying deference to the mystery of man's making instead of the mystery of God? The true veneration of mysteries consists not in making them ourselves, and in receiving blindly the words of men without understanding them; but it consists, either in taking care there to stop where the Scripture itself has stopped, without presuming to go further at all, or else, in taking care to understand all words of human institution in such a sense as that they be sure to signify neither more nor less than the words of Scripture necessarily do. Whosoever puts any meaning upon words of human institution, which does not appear to another (upon his sincerest and most careful examination) to be the same with the sense of the words of Scripture, must not complain that the other opposes his own reason to the authority of God, when indeed he opposes it only to those who would make human authority the same with divine. Affecting to speak unintelligibly, when the Scripture itself has not done so, is indeed promoting scepticism only, not true religion."

In addition to illustrations derived from Scripture, the writer has, in small bounds and at little expense, afforded the biblical student a view of the opinions of many of the most eminent of the ancient Fathers, as well as several of the most distinguished names that followed or were connected with the Reformation. So far as human learning, ability, and faithful persevering inquiry, are entitled to respect, he has placed before the reader an array of which the Unitarian need not be ashamed.

The subjects on which the writer treats are *the all-important in religion*: the Father, Son, Holy Spirit; gospel worship; and God's will the basis of salvation. At first we were surprised to find a work advocating the pre-existence and high personal dignity of the Saviour, and the personality of the Holy Spirit, coming from our English Unitarian brethren, as we had conceived, but we are glad to find unjustly, that these opinions had with them been exploded. This work has corrected our mistake. In reference to the Father, the statements of the author are: that there is one great First Cause; that there can be but one; that he is God, a person, an intelligent being, not an essence or subsistence; that the Father is that one God, whilst the term God is applied to others; that it is given to him absolutely, and by way of

eminence, and with other high and peculiar titles and attributes. This the writer proves clearly, both from Scripture and many of the most distinguished names belonging to the Christian church. Amongst the peculiarly high titles given to the Father, we notice one because it is with many a source of serious error—"God our Saviour." This is never in Scripture applied to the Son, though it is given to the Father in the same sentence in which he is distinguished from the Son (1 Tim. i. 1; Titus iii. 4, 6). We recommend the following extract to the reader's attention.

"Men, indeed, have argued as if the word God signified the divine essence or substance, and not ~~THE PERSON~~ whose essence or substance it is. This, however, is most unintelligible arguing: for though every person, or intelligent agent, must needs have a substance or essence, and the substance or essence of God is indeed necessarily *infinite* and *perfect*; yet the word God in Scripture, and in all moral or theological writings, the word God, we say, in the religious sense, does not signify *that perfect Being* considered as a *substance or essence* (which is the business of metaphysics), but as the *living person* whose that infinite essence is, and who *governs all things by his supreme power*. So that, though He who is the *God of the Universe* was, indeed, before the creation of things, the same perfect being He now is, yet He had not then that *relative* character which is the signification of the word God in the theological sense, or *our God*, or *the God and Father of All*. Just as a king is the same man, or has the same *substance or essence*, and the same *natural powers or faculties of a man* whether his subjects be supposed to exist or not to exist; but his *relative* title of *King* is always with regard to the *government* of subjects. And were it possible there could subsist in one and the same *individual substance or essence*, two (or more) intelligent living persons or agents, *equally supreme*, and *equally governing the universe*, they would be altogether as *truly* two (or more) Gods, that is, supreme governors, as if their substances were distinct. For the being, or not being, of two or more Gods does not depend upon their *substance* being *united* or *divided*, but upon their *dominion* being *supreme* or *not supreme*. *ONE Supreme Governor of all things* is *ONE GOD*; and whatever other persons exist, either in the *same* or any *other* substance, so long as they have no dominion but derived from Him, the *Unity of God* is secure. But *mere* supreme governors are *mere* Gods; and *equally* so, whether their *substance* be *united* or *divided*, if their *power and authority* be *equally supreme*. This is a very clear and distinct notion, of great importance, and highly deserving of most serious consideration."

Nothing is more calculated to surprise the sincere inquirer after the truth as it is in Jesus, who, from a careful study of the Scriptures, and a regard to their sacred

authority, finds himself obliged to renounce the popular doctrine of the Trinity, than the arguments employed by Trinitarian writers from the plural noun "*Elohim*," usually, though not invariably, translated *God*. In the eighth psalm it is translated *angels*. They say it implies a plurality in God. With as much truth or justice might they say the word *men* implies a trinity in man. More Gods than one it may prove, but human language affords no example similar to their interpretation of the word. Besides, it is perfectly well known that this word, in its plural form, is applied to one man, Moses, to one angel; and, should this not convince them, their own professed belief respecting the Trinity should make them ashamed of such an argument. Take the following quotation.

"But unto the Son (or, concerning the Son) he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.'—Heb. i. 8. The word being in the Hebrew (Psalm xlv. 6) *Elohim*, and (as our translators understand the construction) necessarily applied to the Son singly, or contradistinguished from the Father (the Father being also singly, in the very same passage, styled *Elohim*), shows demonstrably how weak it is to understand that word in other places of the Old Testament as signifying a *plurality of persons*."

With regard to the Lord Jesus Christ, the writer holds his pre-existence and high personal dignity. His views are, that the *Λόγος*, Word, mentioned in the first chapter of John, was a real person—the Christ; that he is called the Word, because, as the revealer, lawgiver, and judge, he declares the will, laws, and sentence of the Father; that the Word and not a human soul existed in flesh; that, when Paul asserts that Christ being rich for our sakes became poor, that he emptied himself of his previous glory, these personal acts prove him to have been a real person; that Christ is called God; that the world was made by or through him; that honour and worship are due to him; but that he is subordinate to the Father, receiving his being, authority, power, and other divine attributes, from him. For the views of the author, on some of these subjects, we quote from pages 120, 121.

"The different states which our blessed Saviour was in *before*, *during*, and *after* his incarnation, have frequently given men occasion to speak of him as of two different persons, and herein they have expressed themselves according to the respective notions they came prepossessed with. When, however, we look into what the sacred writings teach concerning our Saviour, without the preja-

dices of systematic writers, all will agree that there is no name given to Christ by inspired writers which denotes his being *two* persons; but they always speak of him as of a *person*, as of one *individual intelligent agent*, who at different times appeared in different forms, in different states and capacities; first as God, and afterwards as man. He was first ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, *in the form of God*, and as ἄγγελος Θεοῦ, *the angel of God*; and then as ἄνθρωπος, *man*; or ἐν ὁμοιωματι ἀνθρώπων γενομένος, *made in the likeness of men*; σκηνῇ ἐσθλῇ ὡς ἄνθρωπος, *found in fashion as a man*, by being incarnate, by existing in a tabernacle of flesh, by taking part of flesh and blood; and lastly he was exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, to be Judge of quick and dead. The Scriptures never speak of him with the *least hint* of any *division* of his person, nor upon any occasion consider *only part of him at a time*; but tell us that all things were made by the Word, or by the Son, by whom we have redemption through his blood (Col. i. 13—16). It is always as of *ONE* and *the same person* who did such and such things at different times and in different capacities; at one time *in the form of God*, at other times *in the likeness of men*, by *taking part of flesh and blood*. The notions of the present day are such, however, as cannot but too naturally lead men to speak of the Lord as of *two persons*, and (in the language of Cerinthus, who asserted Jesus to be *one person* and Christ another) to affirm some things to be spoken of his humanity and others of his divinity. But upon what foundation do such notions rest? For neither the Scriptures nor primitive writers of the church ever thus divided our Lord into two persons."

We have already stated that the author is a believer in the personality of the Holy Spirit, to whom he ascribes all miracles, even those wrought by our Saviour himself: the inspirer of the prophets; the comforter and sanctifier of the believer; but subordinate to the Father and the Son. In reference to this subject the following passage deserves insertion.

"From the passages cited in this and the preceding sections, it is evident that the Scriptures afford no example or warrant for addressing either prayer or praise to the Holy Spirit, or to the Trinity. The notion, indeed, of three persons constituting one intelligent being, and that intelligent being the *ONE* God, involves a most serious consideration: it is dividing and subdividing the most perfect, simple, indivisible, uncompounded, incorruptible, immaterial Being into parts; then making these parts intelligent beings and addressing these parts distinctly, and then joining together these parts by one general term, and addressing again that. This is a consideration of no mean importance, and merits the reader's most serious attention."

Without professing to agree in all respects with this writer, we can warmly recommend the work to the careful and attentive perusal of those who are anxious to have

their opinions formed on the basis of God's blessed word, divested of scholastic jargon and the mysteries of man's creating.

INTELLIGENCE.

CONVENTION AT PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND.

A MEETING of Unitarian ministers and laymen, from various districts, was held at Providence, R. I. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, October 2d, 3d, and 4th, 1843, for the purpose of considering the state of religion in their church, and devising means for its extended influence.

On the afternoon of the first of these days a large number of the clergy, with a few of the laity from other towns, assembled, and in the evening proceeded to the First Congregational Church, where religious services were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Dewey, of New York. He chose for his text the passage from Psalm cxii. 6: "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance;" and occupied himself exclusively in considering the position and character of the late Dr. Channing. It was an appropriate theme, whether regard be paid to the fact that the discourse was delivered on the anniversary of his death, or to the relation which Dr. Channing sustained to the denomination before which it was preached.

The remarks of the various persons who took part in this important convention bore chiefly on the following resolutions, which were offered to the meeting.

"That there is an imperious call upon our denomination, for a clear and earnest statement of their distinctive doctrines, and an urgent application of them to practical life."

"That there is pressing need of more united action in our churches, especially among our men."

"That as the spirit of reverence is too little cherished in our land, devotion should have a more prominent place both in public worship and personal culture."

"That regarding the Christian Church as an organized communion of believers, we are called upon to make new efforts in behalf of its peculiar ordinances."

On Wednesday evening religious services were attended in the Westminster Church, which was filled.

At the close of the services in the pulpit, the Lord's Supper was celebrated. It has never been our privilege, says one who was present, to attend on any occasion when the affections were more strongly, and sweetly, and devoutly moved by addresses to the throne of grace than on this. It was the embodiment of true devotion. It seemed a foretaste of the New Jerusalem which had come down to the earth, and which all present were permitted to enter for a season, therewith to be blessed.

The convention is represented as having been a most interesting and profitable one. Nothing occurred to disturb its harmony, and through the whole of the discussion there ran a love of earnest

spiritual feeling, which had never been noticed, to the same degree, in any previous meeting of the same kind.

EVANGELICAL REFORM IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

In the last number of the *Christian Reformer*, appears a most interesting notice, by the Rev. J. C. Meeke, of Joseph Barker, who, as the readers of the *Bible Christian* are aware, after having laboured for thirteen years among the New Connexion Methodists, was expelled by them on account of heterodox opinions.

"Mr. Barker was not to be silenced by the interdict of man. He knew that he had a mission from God to preach the blessed Gospel to his fellow-men, and faithfully and nobly is he executing his sacred trust. From the time of his expulsion, he has not ceased to proclaim what he believes to be the glad tidings of Christ's gospel,—at one time in the school-room, at another in the scientific lecture-room, and often in God's own great temple, amidst nature's living glories. Thousands have heard him with gladness, and with one soul bid him God speed. Numerous churches have been gathered by Mr. Barker's unwearied exertions, and are now rejoicing in the rest and freedom to which the truth is gradually leading them. In most of the towns, and in many of the populous villages of Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, and Lancashire, he has admiring friends, who have not only listened with joy to his teaching, but who read with avidity his numerous small publications, as they issue periodically from the press, the spirit and style of which indicate that he is familiar with the writings of Dr. Channing, but still more so with the divine lessons and spirit of the Son of God.

"On the 24th and 25th of November last, Mr. Barker was announced by posting-bills, to preach in the Unitarian Chapel, Stockton-on-Tees, the use of which had been previously solicited by his friends for this purpose, the Orthodox pulpits, as a matter of course, being all closed against him. When the hour of the first-mentioned day arrived, both the pews and aisles of the place were crowded, although this was his first missionary visit to this town. The service was opened with a hymn and short prayer by the minister of the chapel, after which Mr. Barker ascended the pulpit and introduced himself to the audience in a few prefatory remarks. The subject of the lecture, as announced in the bills, was the nature and objects of Faith. The first position the preacher took was, that faith, in the abstract, is a belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. In proof of this position, he cited several passages from the New Testament, accompanying each with pertinent remarks. Having placed this fact strongly before the minds of his hearers, the lecturer proceeded to show that this was the rock on which the Saviour declared to Peter that he would build his church. This point was handled with great distinctness and power. Advancing another step, Mr. Barker declared this to be the only confession demanded, by the apostles and primitive churches, of persons on their admission to church-fellowship and

Christian brotherhood; that this simple faith constituted man or woman, in apostolic times, a believer in Christ, and a member of his kingdom on earth, and gave him a title to Christian privileges. He maintained that no other faith ought to be demanded by existing churches, and would not, were the Scriptures allowed to direct their practices. But what is the fact? the preacher asked. Why, that a thousand other things than this simple faith are required, at least to be by the lips assented to, by modern churches, many of which are contradictory one to another, alike opposed to common sense, reason and the Saviour's teaching, and which are more or less subversive of charity, peace, and moral holiness, inasmuch, as they substitute feeling for principle, and the merit of faith or belief, in place of that condition of the soul which can be attained only by the habitual practice of the divine precepts.

"At this stage of the lecture, the preacher, with great vividness, placed before his audience the distinction between a dead and a living faith. He read a large portion of the 2d chapter of James' Epistle, commenting on its several parts as he proceeded in, what appeared to the writer, a novel, and certainly a very happy and effective manner. He stated, that as soon as the belief in Jesus as the Messiah became a motive-power in the mind, leading the believer to obey God in all things, it might and ought to be regarded as a saving faith, the faith that saves from sin, delivers from the fear of death, makes men children of God, brings forth his image in the soul, creates a new moral state, a meetness for the service and blessedness of heaven.

Mr. Barker has since been preaching at Leeds and various other places, and seems to produce a deep impression wherever he is heard. To many parts of Yorkshire, the words of the Saviour may be applied: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to the harvest."

INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB AND THE BLIND.

The annual meeting of this Institution was held on Thursday, December 28, 1843, in the Commercial Buildings, and was numerously and respectably attended. When the meeting had been opened by the singing of a hymn by the blind pupils, and prayer, Lord Lurgan, who occupied the chair, made some very appropriate introductory remarks, in the course of which he dwelt on the fact, that the Institution was not intended merely or chiefly for the benefit of Belfast, but of Ulster at large; and stated, that, in the province, there are above 3,200 blind persons, and about 1,600 deaf mutes. The report for the past year represented the society to be in a flourishing condition. It mentioned the death of a pupil who was both dumb and blind, about whom a great interest had been felt; and stated that the foundation of the new building had been laid in August—that it was rapidly progressing—that upwards of £3,000 had been already subscribed, and that it will require about £5,000 more to complete it.

We do not know any benevolent Institution more deserving of countenance and support than one which aims at the education of

the blind and the dumb in our province; and it is, therefore, with pain we feel compelled to notice a rule of this otherwise most excellent society, which requires that all pupils must be instructed in religion according to the standards of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland. If this institution expect the support of all parties, and aim at the education of the blind and dumb of all parties it should expunge a regulation fraught with so much of the exclusive and sectarian spirit. While it remains, the society may be represented as saying to the parents who are Roman Catholics, Unitarians, or of any other denomination,—“We will educate your unfortunate children, but you must sell them to our faith, and let us instil into their untutored minds doctrines which you abhor.” Shame! say we, that such a principle should be recognised in Ulster. Shame! that such a noble Institution should be fettered by terms so cruelly unjust. Lord Lurgan was in error when he supposed that he saw around him men and ministers of *all* denominations. It was not so, and it cannot be so until this objectionable rule be cancelled.

**CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. EDGAR AND THE
REV. J. S. PORTER.**

In the course of the past month a correspondence, between Dr. Edgar and the Rev. J. Scott Porter, has appeared in the *Northern Whig*, arising out of the extraordinary speech which Dr. Edgar made in October last, and which graced the pages of the *Bible Christian*. As this correspondence has been republished as a pamphlet, and as, by the liberality of the Unitarian Society, it will be stitched up with the present number of the *Bible Christian*, we need not dwell on it. Such controversies are generally to be deprecated, because they are calculated to stir up bitter feelings, and engender personal hatred, while they expose religion to the sneers of the unbeliever; but, in this case, there was no danger of Dr. Edgar's spirit being rendered more bitter than it appeared, as exhibited in his memorable speech, and we are happy to find, that, with everything to annoy and insult, Mr. Porter has displayed a calm and patient temper.

The most disgusting feature in this correspondence is, the cant of Dr. Edgar about love for Mr. Porter and his brethren, while he is assailing them with taunts, and covering them with obloquy and insult. We might, perhaps, pardon his personalities, unbecoming and vulgar as they are; we might pass over his charge against our faith as having an infidel tendency, for the bigot is blind to every faith but his own; we might forgive him for accusing us of immorality, for all morality with him is centred in his own “Christian Temperance,” and as some of us go not quite so far, and others a little farther, we are of course immoral; but when a man professes great love for us, and almost in the same sentence accuses us as calumniators and liars, and does all he can to wound our feelings and injure our character, we are constrained to suspect that that man is a knave. How little—we have often felt in pe-

rusing this painful controversy—how very little does the spirit of the professing Christian minister correspond with that of our Lord, and how much with the spirit of those disciples who would call down fire from heaven.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENT.

On the evening of Dec. 20, the teachers of the Sunday School of the Remonstrant Congregation, York-street, entertained about eighty of the more regular pupils of the school at tea. Addresses were delivered, after tea, by Mr. Wm. Emerson and the Rev. D. Magennis.

OBITUARY.

DIED—On Christmas Day, 1843, at the age of seventy-nine years, **ALITHEA MARIA**, relict of the late **JAMES FERGUSON**, Esq. formerly of Whitepark, near Ballyclare, and only sister of Major John Boyle Brownrigg, who fell while leading his troops to an assault on the fort of Sirsa, near Delhi, in 1804, in which they were successful. She was universally esteemed for the purity of her life and the dignity of her deportment, and for the pious resignation and exemplary fortitude with which she sustained many domestic afflictions and trials. She was brought up as a member of the Episcopal Church, but after she attained to years of discretion, from conviction occasioned by a careful examination of the Scriptures, she adopted the principles professed by the Presbytery of Antrim, and was for a number of years, till her decease, a zealous and consistent member of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in Belfast. She was a firm believer in the gospel of Christ; and, during a long and well-spent life, was a zealous advocate for it, as revealed to us by himself, and expounded by his apostles, untrammelled by creeds or confessions of faith.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have received a letter from "a constant Reader," drawing our attention to a paragraph in the last report of the Belfast Unitarian Society, in which the circulation of the *Bible Christian* is erroneously represented as having diminished in the past year, and informing us that he finds by a careful inquiry, that the circulation has been as great, if not greater, than in the preceding year. We are sure the Committee of the Unitarian Society will be glad to be set right in this matter. We perceive that a suggestion is thrown out by a correspondent of the *Inquirer*, that several of our periodicals should be merged into one, which might thus be liberally supported; but we entirely concur with the Editor of that valuable journal, in thinking that each has its own sphere of influence, and in that sphere may accomplish much good if sustained by the zeal of our ministers and laity.

We have been requested to publish a letter of remonstrance, written many years ago by a person who had been expelled from a Methodist Sunday School, because he taught anti-trinitarian doctrines; but as there is nothing new in the letter, and nothing unreasonable in the expulsion of the writer under the circumstances stated, we think it unnecessary to publish the communication.—It may be had by applying at our office.

ERRATUM.—In the January number, the birthplace of Dr. Ware was by a typographical error, printed "Kinghaven;" it should have been "HINGHAM," Mass.

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the Rev. C. J. McAlester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. III.

MARCH, 1844.

VOL. VII.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

"Welcome, delightful morn,
Thou day of sacred rest;
I hail thy kind return—
Lord, make these moments blest."

How idle the discussion that has been sometimes raised respecting the obligation to keep the Sabbath day! Imagine, for a moment, that this sacred institution were swept away by the tide of worldly-mindedness—imagine that we had so far left behind us the venerated practices of other days, and so far forgotten the command of God, the example of Christ, and the practice of his Apostles, as habitually to violate the rest and sanctity of the Sabbath, and pursue the occupations and pleasures of life with unceasing, uninterrupted eagerness—how soon would religion too be forgotten, and its blessed precepts obliterated from the heart. We conceive that we do not overestimate this appointment of the Almighty, when we represent it as the strongest bulwark against the influx of a worldly spirit, and the most powerful guardian of the religion of our country: and we regard, not without feelings of anxiety and apprehension, the tendency which, from time to time, appears towards a less strict and scrupulous observance of its holy hours.

We do not mean to defend the rigid puritanical views which have been propounded and practised respecting this institution. We have often deplored the evil results that necessarily flow from the moping, melancholy spirit that is thus infused into hours that should be the happiest of our life—hours that should be to all of us the foretaste of an eternal Sabbath in heaven. Especially have we mourned the evil effects which such views must produce on the minds of children—giving them false and repulsive impressions of religion, and leading them to regard th

return of the Sabbath with pain instead of pleasure. We are no advocates, then, for a puritanical Sabbath—for religious services so lengthened that the spirit flags under them, and the body itself is wearied—for family intercourse, so austere that the kindly affections and cheerful feelings of our nature are sealed up, and a gloom is spread over the domestic circle. From such scenes the soul recoils, and with them true devotion can have little harmony. But while we are thus opposed to a too rigid observance, we are far from joining in the ultra-liberal views respecting this blessed institution, that have been sometimes expressed, and more frequently practised.

We regard the Sabbath as designed by its author to be a day of rest ; and we cannot too much admire the wisdom and goodness which arranged this periodical cessation from worldly business. It has been called "the poor man's day"—and to the poor it comes laden with blessings ; it releases him from the toils of the week, and gives him a season for rest and meditation. But not to the poor alone, nor to the poor chiefly, is this day precious : it comes with offers of ease and respite to all, for all are hurried on in the everflowing current of worldly cares or pleasures—and to all, if they will receive it, it is a grateful respite. Those who understand the economy of the human system have alleged that this periodical rest, if carefully observed, refreshes and strengthens the mind and body, so that both gain in activity and efficiency, and thereby accomplish a greater quantity of work ; and if this be so, what a testimony to the goodness of God, and to the value of our religion ! Poets have imagined that the Sabbath rest and bliss are participated in, not only by man and the beasts that toil for man, but even by the other orders of the animate creation, and perchance, too, by the inanimate objects around us—that "the blackbird's note comes mellow from the dale," that "the lulling brook murmurs more gently down the glen," and that "calmness sits throned on the unmoving clouds." To be sure this is but the poet's fancy ; but it is a beautiful fancy, and bespeaks that hallowed influence which the Sabbath infuses over the Christian's heart, and which is thence reflected upon the outward creation. And, without passing into the regions of fancy, what a beautiful picture of tranquillity and repose does the Sabbath spread before the mind ;—

"With dove-like wings Peace o'er yon village broods:
The dizzying mill-wheel rests; the anvil's din
Hath ceased; all, all around is quietness.

* * * The toil-worn horse, set free,
Unheedful of the pasture, roams at large;
And, as his stiff, unwieldy bulk he rolls,
His iron-armed hoofs gleam in the morning ray."

Were a stranger—one whose ear the name of Christianity and of civilized Europe had never reached, transported to our land on the Sabbath-day—and were he, ignorant of the strifes that have disgraced our Christian profession, and the wars, and turmoils, and crimes, that have disgraced our country—to behold the public mart forsaken and the workshop closed—beasts of burden reposing in peaceful rest, and men, careworn and wearied, resting from their work—were he to listen, too, to the sound of the church-going bell, and see young and old passing on in streams to the house of prayer, and behold them there bowing in the simplicity of Christian worship, what an impressive lesson it would give him—not, indeed, of our own worth, but of the worth of that faith which we profess.

As a day of rest the Sabbath is most precious; and they are violating its sacredness who needlessly carry into its holy hours the cares and occupations of the week—who steal a portion from its morning or evening for worldly business, as if impatient to submit to the kind appointment of the Almighty, and unwilling, even for a few hours, to leave those engagements which, alas! they must soon leave for ever. It would be needless to enter into an inquiry respecting works of mercy and necessity; those who are anxious to observe the spirit of God's command will have little difficulty in determining when they may transgress the letter; and those who cant on such points, are probably more eager to puzzle than instruct, more anxious to evade than to observe the commandment.

One great object of the Sabbath, then, is to interrupt our ordinary business, to stop the course of our worldly thoughts; and, for this purpose, it is necessary that all should carefully abstain from their worldly business—that the merchant should not open his books, nor the shop-keeper retail his goods, nor the farmer work in his fields, nor the mechanic employ himself at his bench; and it is necessary, too, that the employer should aid the employed to keep this day of rest; that servants should be permitted

to abstain from much of their work, and not required needlessly to minister to the appetite, the vanity, or the amusement of their masters.

But when we have set forth this day as sacred to rest, we have not fully explained its character—we have stated only a part of its object; an important part indeed, but not the most important. It should be sacred to God and to piety, to public worship, and private prayer, to religious communion, and to secret meditation. We have already represented it as the safeguard of religion. The influence of the world serves to dissipate serious thoughts, and efface religious impressions. The holy hours of the Sabbath return to renew those impressions, and invigorate a waning faith. And it is this union of religion with rest that may be said to consecrate the Lord's day, and render it a blessing to the world. We are bold to say that this day, if regarded, as by some it is, merely as a day of rest from ordinary work, proves to be rather an evil than a blessing. It encourages indolence. What indolence and waste of time does a neglected Sabbath bring? It exposes the unoccupied mind to sinful thoughts, and the idle hands to unrighteous deeds. Many a wretched criminal can trace to the neglected Sabbaths of childhood and youth, the evil habits which have enslaved him; many a degraded drunkard can trace to neglected Sabbaths the beginning of that frightful appetite which, indulged in idle hours, gradually grew beyond restraint, and drew him down to destruction. And not to descend to the notorious drunkard and the public criminal, how many, especially among our youths, have been led into dissipation by the abused leisure of the Lord's day; and how many (moral they may be in their life, and upright in their dealings) have had the impressions of early piety effaced by resisting the Sabbath call to worship, and feasting themselves on the political and secular news which our *Sunday* newspapers most temptingly provide. Yes, and how many, too, have dissipated their serious thoughts by Sunday jaunts of pleasure, and silenced their conscience, and screened their folly, by the plausible apology of admiring the works of nature! There is nothing in the gospel of Christ, so far as we can understand it, to prevent us from dwelling on the ennobling works of God, but much to prompt us to a careful observation of them; there is

nothing in the Sabbath, so far as we can understand it, to prevent us from giving a portion of its precious leisure to the contemplation of God, as he is to be read in the works of his hands. And he who has been pent up in a heated room, or engaged in a crowded town throughout the week, may profitably as well as pleasantly inhale the fresh and balmy air, and renew his wearied spirit by walking and meditating amidst the glories of creation. But we know too much of Sunday trips to believe that most of those who absent themselves from the house of prayer, are led by pious feelings to seek God in his works. If we are Christians, let us act as Christians; let us express our reverence for religion, and our acknowledgment of its importance by devoting the Sabbath hours to its cultivation. The week is given to the world; this day should be given to God. The pause which it brings to the affairs of the world should speak to us of that pause which death will soon bring to the bustle and cares of life, and remind us of that rest which remains for the good in Heaven. Its dawning hour should call to our remembrance the event by which to Christians the First day is consecrated, and raise our thoughts to that glorious hope which the resurrection of our Lord has unfolded.

If the leisure of the Sabbath be judiciously distributed, and suitable exercises, engagements, and meditations be chosen, its hours will not pass sluggishly on; nor will it be necessary to seek, in the ordinary amusements of life, a respite from its dulness, but we shall find it in its rest, its enjoyments, and its influences, "the best of all the seven." Happy will it be for those who call the Sabbath a delight, and spend its blessed hours in the varied exercises of religion, and the cultivation and interchange of Christian feelings. Unhappy must it be for those who make no effort to raise their minds above the passing pleasures and absorbing cares of the present life, and sleep away the scene of their earthly probation, without a single aspiration after those higher and holier scenes to which the Sabbath points, and to which the Saviour invites us.

Impressed, then, as we are, with the value and the absolute necessity of the Christian Sabbath, we cannot too strongly deprecate that liberalizing spirit which would break down its barriers, and subject it to the encroachments of worldliness. While we are opposed to the aus-

terity which disfigures the Christian Sabbath, we are no less opposed to the laxity which destroys it. Some there are who claim for themselves the Christian name, while they trample on the sacredness of God's day, and squander it away in indolence, or worldly amusements; but no interpretation of Christianity, we conceive, can justify such practices, and least of all that held by our church, which places it beyond ceremonial observances, and demands a spiritual worship—the worship of the thoughts and the affections.

We believe that much of the indifference to religion which prevails, may be traced to the neglect of the Lord's day; and we grieve that so many in connection with Christian churches persevere in a course which tends so obviously to their own injury, and to the injury of the church to which they belong, and of society at large. If we desire to retain the spiritual aids which we now possess, and to transmit them to our children; if we value Christianity, and desire to perpetuate it in our land; if we desire to resist the evil influences of the world, and give our hearts to the service of God, let us guard with care the sacred hours of the Christian Sabbath, and remember to keep it holy.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

DEAR SIR,—To sustain an interest in a subject often brought before the public mind, needs the aid of talents of a high order; so that the same truths may be brought to bear with new force on the hearts and consciences of men. I make no pretensions to such a gift from nature as this proposition involves; but as I feel a deep, and steadily increasing, interest in some passing events, which appear, to my mind, of the greatest importance to the happiness of the human race, I am, from time to time, impelled as it were, to lay my simple thoughts and reflections upon them, before my fellow-men, trusting to their candid interpretation of my motives. I believe it is the duty of each one of God's rational creatures to labour, to the best of his or her ability, for the advancement of the right and the true upon earth, so that the highest degree

of happiness which man can attain to, may be placed within his reach ; and which, it seems to me, is to be secured by making those pure principles the guide and rule of our lives. Teetotalism is, in my estimation, the most important alteration in the habits of the people that has taken place in the world for many centuries, and I am unable to express the feelings of regret which come over my mind, when I think of the indifference with which that glorious reformation is witnessed by the wealthy classes of society amongst us. How powerful must be the influence of that ruthless destroyer, alcohol, seeing that it has sufficient influence over the appetites and affections, to keep the most enlightened men enthralled in a slavery so benighting, that they will not shake off its chains, although the happiness and prosperity of their country so evidently depend on their virtuous determination to overthrow customs so degrading and demoralizing, as all acknowledge our drinking customs to be. Intemperance is a mighty evil ; it is one which feeds upon its own indulgence ; it saps the foundations of human happiness, and puts a complete stop to the advancement of any people who indulge in it ; all its influences are of a degrading and demoralizing character ; it overwhelms the rich and the poor, the ignorant and the enlightened, in one common ruin ; in a word, it is the eternal foe of man ; and all its power is derived from what is foolishly termed *moderation* in the use of alcoholic drinks. A moment's reflection will make it evident to every mind, that the degradation caused by drunkenness is a gradual process ; there is something so insidious in the approaches of that destroyer, that its victims have no idea of their danger—it comes upon them unawares—and then, those companions who lured them on to destruction, are among the first to condemn their weakness, and to cast them off as creatures too vile to be any longer associated with. The history of our country affords ample proof, that neither talent, nor education, exempts those who indulge in intoxicating drink, from degradation and contempt ; the finest minds, as well as the lowest intellects, are prostrated beneath its baneful influences ; the peace and happiness of families, in all ranks of life, are injured, and often destroyed, by its use ; and this does not happen in few, isolated cases ; thousands, and tens of thousands, are annually brought within its accursed

vortex; it has been long flowing over the land, it was swelling into a furious torrent, threatening universal ruin to all. Good men, in all times, deplored the evils produced by drinking customs; various remedies to stay their desolating influences were devised; society frowned on the drunkard; laws of a severe nature were made to punish him for his breaches of their ordinances; ministers of religion preached against his sinful practices; the endearing affections of wives and children sought to win him back to the paths of virtue: but all these means failed in arresting the progress of an evil which was daily increasing in intensity, which was steadily marching onward in its destructive career, blighting the fairest prospects of social happiness, and scattering desolation all around.—All the measures adopted to arrest the progress of drunkenness, in our country, until the principles and practices of teetotalism were promulgated, failed in producing any good results. The nation was becoming more and more drunken in the habits of its people, and such it must have continued to be, because it was not generally known that the appetite for strong drinks is a physical as well as a moral evil; and that, therefore, it could only be cured by a total abandonment of the use of that poison which produced it. I doubt if there be a single instance on record of a drunkard having been reclaimed from his sinful habits by preaching, or by moderation (so called). The sagacious Dr. Johnson long since discovered that it was easy to abstain altogether from the use of strong drinks, but difficult, if not quite impossible, to use them in moderation,—and that truth is now familiar to millions of happy beings who have been emancipated by the glorious discovery of teetotalism; for it has been reserved the honour of rescuing man from a habit which reduces him below the level of the brute. The beauty and efficacy of this heaven-sent reformation now stands conspicuous before the world, and the arguments, or rather the ridicule, by which it is sought to be overthrown, only serve to display its peace and happiness-diffusing principles in more unsullied brightness; and, whatever may be its ultimate fate, whether mankind will accept this great blessing from kind heaven, or foolishly reject so great a boon, its perfect adaptation for the promotion of sobriety, is placed on imperishable record, by the evidence of millions; and those

who oppose its progress, or mar the labours of its advocates, will have to answer to their country, and at the bar of heaven, for all the mischief they have done. The man who, in the present day, and in the face of all the light which is now shining on the subject, throws any impediment in the way of teetotalism, must be considered as the enemy of his race. Let him justify his conduct, if he can. I believe it to be impossible for him to do so. On the united testimony of all competent witnesses, alcohol is the cause, either remotely or indirectly, of nearly all the crime and misery which exist. The experience of ages proves that teetotalism is the only remedy yet discovered for their destruction; therefore, is it not plain that all men are bound by the laws of God, and by their Christian profession, to become teetotallers? The poor of Ireland have given a noble example to their wealthier brethren. If these latter could be induced to practice a similar self-denial, alcohol might soon be banished out of the land by universal consent; and surely that would be a glorious consummation of the disinterested labours of the good Father Mathew, whose name is now blessed by myriads of his fellow-men, whom he has raised out of misery and degradation into a comparatively high degree of earthly happiness. Oh! that my voice could penetrate into the hearts of the wealthy and the elevated in society—I would tell them, in ardent language, to think of their duties as men, as citizens, as Christians; in all these capacities, to do all the good in their power to their fellow-men is their bounden duty. This proposition will not be denied by any man of feeling; and surely, it is as true as God's own truth, that all who encourage the use of intoxicating drinks fall short of their duty in these respects. I would not willingly become the accuser of my brethren; I would rather appeal to their kindest feelings, and ask them all to assist in banishing that which all admit is the cause of deep, deep, very deep misery. How any can place the gratification of a sensual appetite for strong drinks, in opposition to the happiness which teetotalism must make permanent around them, is amazing to me. Are we not all children of the one good and gracious parent?—all alike capable of enjoying happiness in this world?—and all alike expectants of a blissful immortality in a world to come?—Are not all our pleasures in life, and all our hopes of future

joys, destroyed, or rendered insecure, by our drinking customs? And what pleasures have they to put into the scale, to make amends for these fearful risks? None; really none whatever; they poison our purest springs of happiness, they mar friendship, they destroy health, and there is not one intellectual pleasure, not one worthy or manly enjoyment, enhanced by their use. I do not contend that earth would be formed into a paradise by the total disuse of intoxicating drinks; but I do fearlessly appeal to all intelligent men and women, to bear me out in the assertion, when I maintain that great and abounding happiness would be the certain result.

It is a lamentable truth, that, in Ireland, there are very few men and women, in the higher walks of society, actively engaged in the promotion of teetotalism; that but little money is subscribed for sustaining that Christian, that godlike principle, so that its advocates suffer for want of sympathy, and want of means, to aid them in their operations. We have no temperance press to assist the good cause, and, although editors generally are very willing to co-operate in its promotion, the labour of furnishing them with essays on the subject is left in the hands of a very few individuals. This is not as it should be, neither is such the case in England; in that land, teetotalism has yet made but slow progress among the people, yet there are to be found there many, very many persons of wealth and the highest respectability, who devote much time and money for furtherance of the good work. A convention in London, to excite a general interest in the cause, will probably be held in June next, when, it is hoped, delegates from different and distant parts of the world will attend. Let us turn our eyes to America, and, although no abundant harvest such as the good Father Mathew has gathered in here, meets our eyes in that fair land, among the people there, yet we shall behold a sight to gladden our best affections. In America; men of the noblest minds, of the most cultivated intellects, glory in being standard-bearers in the ranks of teetotalism. No false shame restrains them in the expression of their abhorrence of those drinking customs which are the greatest curse of the earth. Under the influence of the character and talents of such men, public opinion, in whole districts, has branded the destroyer, alcohol, as a public nuisance; so that in several

towns, a man who used it in any shape would feel himself degraded in the estimation of society. An American clergyman told me lately that he believed, if he was known to drink ardent spirits in New Hampshire, he would not be invited to preach in a single pulpit in that State. And he also informed me, that he knew one town, of 4,000 inhabitants, in which an uncle of his is chief magistrate, where no intoxicating drinks, of any kind, could be procured; and, as an illustration of the blessed effects produced by perfect sobriety, that his uncle, who is a lawyer, told him he had lost three-fourths of his business, in consequence of the peace and contentment produced among all classes by teetotalism. I could multiply instances, in proof of the delightful change that has taken place among the upper classes of society in America, since they abandoned the use of intoxicating drinks. But it is time for me to draw to a conclusion. Oh! it would be a happy day for Ireland, if all her sons and daughters were banded together in a brotherhood of teetotallers! If we all united in so glorious a confraternity, the whole world would look on us with admiration. Our dissensions would melt away before the genial influences of affection and good will; our misery and destitution would give place to comfort and happiness; the money now expended in the promotion of crime and poverty, would, when turned into healthy channels, produce morality, and wealth to all. Then, indeed, might the ministers of religion step in, and, with almost a certainty of success, call on the people to become true followers of the Prince of Peace. In this good work their efforts have hitherto proved vain—and vain will they continue to be, until the demoralizing drinking customs of society give place to the heavenly practice of teetotalism. Let ministers of religion, who refuse to adopt its principles and its practice, ponder well on the position they occupy. I believe it is a very false one, and that they will never effect the good they should be instrumental in promoting, until they become the zealous and active labourers in this good work, which comes freighted with blessings, unalloyed by any evils, to the human race. The writings of the illustrious Channing are stamped with one great idea, "the worth of the human soul." If this glorious idea were deeply planted in all our hearts, would any of us risk the debasement of the immortal spark, by the use

of that poison which so often reduces men below the level of the brute creation? Drunkenness ought to be dreaded by an immortal being as the utmost degradation to which he could be reduced; for it is a voluntary overthrow of reason—of that priceless gift of God to man, which no man, who had any true sense of the dignity of his nature, could contemplate without horror. Your useful and most interesting little periodical, does not, I suppose, find its way far beyond the precincts of Christian Unitarianism; I call on all who profess that honoured belief, to “prove their faith by their works.” The possession of the truth, as it is in Jesus, will only add to our condemnation, if we do not make our lives instrumental in the promotion of good to our fellow-men—in the elevation of humanity.—Teetotalism is eminently calculated to promote these objects, I therefore commend teetotalism to all who may read this letter; I beg of them all to excuse its many deficiencies, and only to think of the zeal which animates the writer for the promotion of a reformation, which, he believes, will produce happiness wherever it is adopted.

I am, my dear Sir, respectfully yours,

JAMES HAUGHTON.

Dublin, Feb. 1844.

THE POETRY OF HUMBLE LIFE.

BY ELIZABETH YOUATT.

[The following is taken from the recent publications of the Christian Tract Society of London, to whose tracts, both in the old and new series, we are indebted for so many illustrations of practical Christianity. In transferring it to our pages, we believe that we are not only consulting the gratification of our readers, but also promoting the spread of Christian sympathy.]

“THE divinity of the human soul in its abasement,” says a modern philanthropist, “is not lost, but obscured—its moral powers not annihilated, but weakened—and the image of God defaced, but not destroyed;” and the sentiment is full of a profound truth, which we would fain endeavour to illustrate by the recital of a few simple and touching facts, which have fallen immediately under our own observation, or been communicated to us by those on whose veracity we could implicitly rely;—gleanings from

among the rude annals of those who have no other chronicler—the poor!—and affording glimpses of hidden beauty, moral greatness, and the unquenchable spirit of good, which should teach us a deep reverence for human nature in every condition of life; but most where it has had most to struggle and contend with, and yet neither crime, nor poverty, nor temptation, has been able utterly to overwhelm it.

In a dark and crowded court in the heart of our great city, the very existence of which was known, perhaps, only in the immediate neighbourhood, where, from the constant quarrels of its miserable inhabitants, it had become a perfect nuisance, and leading to no thoroughfare, frequented merely by the inmates themselves, or looked upon, in the improving spirit of the age, as a spot to be shortly swept away and transformed, as by the wand of an enchanter, into one of those splendid streets, which make us almost wonder what is to become of the poor if all this goes on,—for, of a surety, with its princely houses and porticos, it is no place for them; well, in this court dwelt the simple heroine of our first sketch. There were nine families living in one house, and Jane Anderson—for that was her name—with an only child, made the tenth!

At the time of which we write she was scarcely more than five and twenty, although a casual observer, judging from the hard, careworn features, would have taken her to be many years older, and her eyes and teeth were still bright and glittering. Her husband, it was said, finding it impossible to bear the violence of her temper, had deserted her, and gone away no one knew whither. But men have ever some such excuse ready; and who knows, save heaven and herself, what sore and bitter trials might have turned its sweetness into gall, making her what she was now? It was fearful at times to hear Jane's shrill voice and intemperate language; and even the little child whom she so loved used to creep away, and hide itself in the corner of their dark and dismantled apartment. But when the mother missed her she would grow suddenly calm; and, sitting down upon the floor, call upon the name of her darling in a tone so changed, that the trembling girl came forth at once, timidly at first, and then with a burst of childish fondness clung caressingly about her

neck ; while a subdued expression stole over Jane's coarse but still handsome countenance, which spoke dimly of the past, and that it had not been always thus with her. In common with many others as miserable and reckless as herself, Jane Anderson had too often recourse to that bane and antidote of the poor, at once the comforter and the DESTROYER ! And at such times none dared provoke or even speak to her, although many, who were mothers themselves, when they heard her unsteady footsteps ascending the creaking stairs, or the half-muttered curses in which her spirit vented its fiery wrath, trembled for the poor child. But they had no need ; for although reason seemed obscured, *instinct* taught her gentleness to her helpless babe ; and words of endearment, or the songs of her own youth, tremulously warbled to soothe it to its slumbers, were the only sounds that issued from the apartment.

We have said that few, except the inmates themselves, were ever seen in that dark court, which was, indeed, reckoned almost unsafe ; but there was one who had no fear, because God was with him, and who came among them, day after day, unquestioned and unmolested, like a being of another world. A blessing on those Missionaries, be they of what sect they may, for they are the guardian angels of the poor ! How many a heart, that had been well-nigh frozen into stone, leaped at the voice of human kindness and sympathy ;—how many a dogged countenance and drooping form lighted up, and stood erect with a new consciousness of its own powers ;—how many an earth-wearied spirit caught eagerly at the heavenly boon which he brought, and murmured smilingly, in its troubled sleep, of the promised land ; how many, even among the scorers, received unknowingly the seeds of a deep truth, which time, and suffering, and bitter tears, ripened in the end to a glorious harvest ! And this mighty and silent revolution was the work of one man !

Jane's restless and impatient spirit could ill brook the mild counsels of the Missionary, who had been driven away more than once by her harsh and abusive language ; but there was something in the fair sweet face of the child which brought back the good man again and again with a strange yearning. Seldom a day passed but what the neighbours had some complaint to make—some tale to tell

of Jane's passionate violence; and then, on a sudden, a change came over her, and she never left home but for a few moments in the dusk of evening to make her humble purchases, passing among them unmindful, it would seem, of their taunts and bitter words, which would have once roused her to fury, and looking pale and haggard from much watchfulness. Poor Jane! she had no friend that she knew of in the whole world—her temper had alienated them every one; and yet, when the truth came out at last that the child was ill—the little bright-haired child!—many came forward to proffer their assistance in nursing the sufferer, or sent her such humble comforts as they could ill spare; for the poor are ever kind to one another at such times, knowing well what poverty is: heaven help them if it were not so! Now it was that the Missionary entered once again that miserable apartment—this time unreproached. The invalid was lying with its straw couch spread upon the floor, carefully wrapped up in the garments which the devoted mother had taken off her own person to screen her darling from the piercing cold.—Around the shoulders of the former was a thin faded shawl; it had just been flung over her by the hand of one whom, in consequence of some trivial dispute, she had not met before for months without bitter words, and even blows, being exchanged between them. And now, as the woman silently withdrew, leaving her little offering of fruit by the side of the feverish child, Jane bent down her head and wept, for the first time for years. The Missionary knelt down silently on the ground, and the little girl, won by his kind looks and gentle voice, smiled faintly, and put her burning hands into his.

"Mary Giles says that you know such pretty stories, all about heaven!" said the child: "tell me some, will you?"

He obeyed her gladly, the mother offering no opposition, nor even lifting up her bowed head. Perhaps she slept, for she must have been sadly tired with her long weary watchings for so many nights.

"And shall I really go to this beautiful land?" questioned the child at length, with joyous eagerness; while the Missionary, remembering the gentle commandment of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God"

(Mark x. 14), could reply at once, as the young heart yearned to be answered. And, after a time, stealing away, he sent such medical assistance as the emergency of the case required; but it was too late! And the child, still dwelling upon the Missionary's words, died with a bright smile upon its lips; while, at the same moment, there arose from the mother a thrilling shriek of anguish and despair, which long haunted the memory of those who heard it.

The poor but kind neighbours of the bereaved woman clubbed together to defray the trifling expenses of that humble funeral; a weaver, working with difficulty in consequence of a hurt in one of his hands, sitting up all one night, in order that he might be able to contribute his mite without injustice to his own well-nigh starving children. But when it was all over, and she re-entered her now desolate apartment, and cast herself frantically down, none dared to follow or intrude upon her grief. At length the door opened gently—it was the Missionary;—and, rising up with a strange calmness, she dashed away the blinding tears from her eyes, and motioned him to the only seat which the room afforded.

“I have been wishing for you,” said she; “I want you to teach me to be good, that I may see my child again!”

The Missionary was touched by these simple words, and the earnestness with which they were uttered; a higher power, it may be, put it into his heart how he should answer her; for, from that hour, a change came over her whole life, and the pure, undying love of the *mother* triumphed over all the temptations of sin, and those evil passions, which, having once taken root, are so hard to utterly eradicate and subdue. Every Sabbath morning, be the weather ever so inclement, Jane Anderson might have been observed issuing from that narrow court, with her pale but hopeful face, and wending her way to the nearest church, each succeeding week bringing her nearer to *heaven* and her *child*! Her last grateful words breathed out in blessings on the good Missionary, who had taught her how she might once more regain her lost treasure, in that land where the loved and lamented of earth go before to prepare a place for us!

The subject of our next sketch is an Irishwoman,—for the poetry of humble life is confined to no country, and.

abounds; perhaps, more among the children of Erin than any other people we could name. A more cheerful and hard-working woman never breathed than Biddy Dolan; no one ever heard a complaint escape from her lips; but, on the contrary, "she was thankful," she said, "to have her health so good and be able to work for the dear children, until, please God, they should be old enough to do for themselves." Early left a widow, with five little ones depending upon her for their sole support, her struggles and privations can be only guessed at; for the history of the poor is often more wonderful than a fairy tale, only, alas! for them it is not so sure of ending well. In the same house in which the Irishwoman lodged was a poor young thing whom no one knew, with an only child about three years old, whom she supported hardly enough by that most ill-paid of all the few resources left to the indigent and industrious female—plain needlework. But what with the confinement and the loneliness—for she had no friends—and it may be a secret shame and sorrow which preyed night and day upon her heart, she fell ill, and was soon reduced to the brink of the grave. Many were the little delicacies which the widow, too proud to ask anything for herself or children, begged from her more wealthy employers for this sick neighbour; and many a night has she sat up with her after a hard day's washing, bidding her, in her rough but homely way, be of good cheer. As the young mother grew weaker and weaker, her only care seemed to be for her child; and here Biddy was again the comforter, so that she died happy at last with a smile upon her parted lips, and with her the sad and brief history of her young life. Biddy Dolan had *six* children now!

Years passed away—the eldest daughter went out to service; the boys, too, began to do something for themselves, and who so thankful as that old Irishwoman? while every morning might be seen issuing from their humble lodgings a pale, meek-eyed girl, wending her quiet way to a cheap day-school in the neighbourhood. It was the orphan; and many were the privations to which Biddy cheerfully submitted, in order to procure this blessing for her charge. As she often said, she had done very well without learning herself, and her children must manage the same; but this child of the stranger, who knew but

what, after all, she might be well born? At any rate, she could never forget the poor mother's wish just before she died, that little Susan might one day learn to read her Bible, the only thing in the world she had to leave her besides her blessing, and that which this holy book brings with it to its possessor. Although naturally of a quick temper, which the sole management of three high-spirited and somewhat unruly boys tended by no means to subdue, Biddy was never seen, in her sternest moods (and heaven only knows how much there is to tempt and irritate the poor), to lift her hand or utter a single harsh word to the orphan child, who, if the truth must be spoken, was of that dull and slothful disposition most trying to one of a more active temperament; and it made her glad, she said, to remember this, when it pleased heaven to restore the poor little thing to its mother! Many called it a blessed release for both when the child was taken, for she was never well, and would only have been a burden, and fit for nothing. But Biddy wept and lamented as though it had been her own; for there is no deeper love than that which we feel for those to whom we have been kind.

Not a word need be added by us to these simple narratives; and yet they are but pages transcribed at random from the great volume of daily life, which teems with such, rendered oftentimes half illegible by tears. "It is perfectly amazing," writes one, himself a Missionary in the cause we advocate, "how much is given away by the poor; not in money—they have it not to give; but they share their meals, their coals, and, if a neighbour has lost a room through not being able to pay the rent, even their bed. I met, the other day, with a woman, whose children had hardly more than one meal a-day, busy in assisting and obtaining assistance for a family in the same house, still more wretched than themselves." The poor weaver, with his maimed hand; sitting of his own accord at his midnight task; the Irishwoman, with her weary and toil-worn frame, but lovely spirit; the poor Missionary, among his yet poorer brethren, are no isolated instances of the sad and beautiful poetry of humble life, which dwelleth in the deep heart of our mighty city! And although it may often be that no human eye perceives, God sees, and will reward them in his own good time! Although no human hand stoops to chronicle their lowly virtues upon earth,

every good deed shall be written with the pen of angels in the Book of Life! “Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye when ye hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.”—Luke vi. 20, 21.

THE LATE HOUR SYSTEM.

CHRISTIAN philanthropy, which, notwithstanding the strife that is waged between sect and sect, is operating extensively in society, has been recently directed to the evils under which many of our countrymen and countrywomen are labouring, and is now heartily engaged in a noble effort to remove, or, at least, to mitigate them. From time to time, in the course of the last few years, attention has been drawn to the condition of the working classes, and to the cruel servitude in which the practices of society have bound the apprentices and shopmen of our mercantile establishments. Among those who have been thus animated by the love which the gospel inspires, we gratefully concede to our own Channing a high place. In his lectures on the Elevation of the Labouring Classes, he pleads earnestly and irresistibly on behalf of those who, with intellectual faculties and an immortal spirit, are doomed, by the evil practices, or the false constitution of society, to uninterrupted and unvaried toil, as if they were nothing better than beasts of burden, or as if their intellectual and spiritual nature were bestowed on them for no higher purpose than the drudgery of a counting-house or a workshop. To pass over, for the present, the more oppressive condition of other classes, as the milliners, dressmakers, and sempstresses, whose one law of existence is “work, work, work”—and for whom, though Christian philanthropy may do something, Christian legislation should do more—we observe, with unmingled satisfaction, the exertions that are being made to remedy, in one department, the evils to which we refer, by associated efforts to shorten the hours of business in our commercial establishments.

We are glad to know that this subject has been taken up in Belfast; and we trust that a reform so benevolent and so Christian may be carried on amongst us with energy and success.

The late hour system has lately been discussed in the London and provincial newspapers; and several excellent pamphlets have been published detailing its evils, and showing, that while its abandonment would be no injury to the employers, it may prove an unspeakable blessing, bodily, mentally, and morally, to the employed. By the following extracts our readers may form a more correct opinion of the extent and the enormity of this evil: the first paragraph is taken from a London weekly paper, the others from a prize essay on the subject, written by Mr. Thomas Davies, and published by the Metropolitan Drapers' Association.

"The actual state of things which has called forth these endeavours only requires to be placed before the public. Its sympathies and efficient co-operation could not be long withheld. The class of young men employed as Drapers' Assistants is estimated to amount to nearly 20,000 in London alone, and of young women to about 1,000. This large number of persons, generally between the ages of fifteen and thirty (the period of life most fitted for enjoyment and activity) are confined in their shops usually fifteen hours, occasionally seventeen, out of the twenty-four! The hours of business are from six or seven in the morning till eight, nine, ten, or eleven at night, as the case may be; the task of clearing away after the shop is closed takes one, two, or three hours; the time allowed for all meals, put together, is generally not above half an hour. During the whole length of this unnatural day, the assistant is not permitted to sit; for that looks as if business were slack; nor to read. Ventilation is ill attended to, and at night in especial, when the gas is lighted, the atmosphere of the close and crowded shops becomes most deleterious: it is oppressive and sickening, and adds to the 'fever and the fret' of the long day's weary close, to a degree that can scarcely be described. When, at length, business is done, to what relaxation can the wearied mind and exhausted frame turn? A walk in the streets near midnight—the excitements of intoxication and dissipation—these are all that remain for the great majority. To the comparatively few who, in spite of all these drawbacks, do yet contrive to find means for some mental improvement, how much credit and honour are due. But to accomplish this is an additional inroad upon the constitution. After midnight, or before daybreak, these are their only spare intervals. Social enjoyments, systematic or regular mental culture, either by reading or attending lectures, or any kind of intellectual amusement, such as the higher class of dramatic representation, from all these the late hours debar them. When the day of rest comes round—and a day of rest, indeed, it must be to them, it cannot be improved and enjoyed as it ought to be. The morning of that day, when the mind ought to be left free to raise itself to its highest privilege, the holy influence of religion is lost in mach-

needed sleep; the remainder of the day, when the face of nature, the free air, and the social affections ought to be enjoyed and felt, and add their influence to that of which they form a part, is too often given to intemperance, because the mind is jaded, and has fallen from its native dignity. It is hardly necessary to add that disease soon attacks a class thus circumstanced, and that early death is common."

"Our legislators are now devising means for providing London and other large towns with suitable places in which the inhabitants may take exercise, in connexion with a copious supply of fresh air. Alas! for the thousands of young men engaged in shops! Parks and fields, and walks, can be of no avail to them, unless their hours of business are so curtailed as to allow them to share in the privileges of their fellow-citizens! At present, they are denied all such enjoyments. It matters not whether the clear frost of a winter's day invite them to make the hard earth ring with a vigorous step; or the mild beauty of a summer's evening call with a softer voice; they dare not listen to either. The bright sun, the blue sky, and the fresh air, are blessings which God has bestowed upon the meanest of his creatures, but of which they, though among the noblest, are altogether deprived."

"Be it also observed, that while the mechanic or day-labourer has half-an-hour allowed him for breakfast, and an hour for dinner, out of his twelve hours of labour, the assistant draper has no fixed time allowed for either. *Five or ten minutes* is the usual time spent at breakfast or tea; and dinner is hurriedly snatched as it can be, during some momentary intermission of business. The idea of perfect mastication, or of sitting a little while after meals, would be regarded as preposterous. We may safely assert, that in nineteen shops out of twenty, the average time spent at the *three meals*, breakfast, dinner, and tea, is not more than *half-an-hour*. Doubtless, this statement will appear to some of our readers almost incredible; yet, it is 'not more strange than true.'"

"Let it also be remembered that the exertion of the draper is *mental* as well as physical. It involves a great deal of anxiety about matters, which indeed to a mere spectator, may seem very trivial, but which are, to the person they concern, really important. The nature of this anxiety may be best understood by an example: A lady enters a shop, and desires to look at some dresses or shawls. Now, it would be supposed that the assistant draper has merely to exhibit these articles in the most advantageous manner, and that it makes little difference to *him*, whether she happen to like one of them or not. Far otherwise; in some cases it is at the peril of losing his situation that he fails to persuade the lady to buy; in nearly all cases, the frequent repetition of such failures is sure to produce such a catastrophe. It will be obvious, that from this cause alone the mind of the young man must be alternately moved and agitated by fear and hope; by fear of losing his situation, and by the hope, that by means of success as a salesman, he may render his services more valuable, and thus obtain a larger salary."

"They who understand the nature of the human constitution know, that the body may be more thoroughly exhausted by mental emotions of this kind than by almost any mere physical labours."

"It is well known that a large number, perhaps nearly all, of the young men who come from the country to London for employment in this trade, are laid up with illness at the end of two or three months, and many of them obliged to return to the country, being unable to endure the disadvantages of their situation. It is also a fact equally well known to those who are in the trade, that notwithstanding the large number of persons who enter it in youth, *it is a most rare thing to meet with a man as an assistant draper above five and thirty or forty years of age.* Now, making the largest allowance for those who go into business on their own account, and for those who have recourse to other occupations, there will yet remain a considerable number, of whom, we fear, no account can be given, except that *they perish as victims to this system.*"

"Here, then, we behold this large class of young men, who are in the very prime of life, just at that age in which every opportunity of improvement is most valuable, and in which all the powers of the mind ought to be most fully unfolding themselves, surrounded by the means of knowledge, and yet shut out from every avenue that leads to it. The open volume of Nature, which even the untutored Indian may read as he traverses his native wilds, with all of good and beautiful that it presents, in matter for reflection, and food for the imagination; with all the silent lessons that it teaches in the noiseless harmonies of the heavens, and the numberless beauties of the earth—is to them as a sealed book. The almost divine thoughts, the profound meditations, the deep researches, and the marvellous discoveries, which gifted men, age after age, have given forth to the world, and which are now enshrined in *books*—are to them hid treasure after which they are forbidden to seek. Those noble institutions, the temples of science and art, which are the glory of our age, and the pride of our land, might, so far as they are concerned, as well have existed in some by-gone age, or some distant country."

"We have seen, that, in consequence of their late hours of business, it is impossible for them to have recourse to any of the rational and wholesome enjoyments, to which, under other circumstances, we should at once point; such as reading, walking, or attending some literary institution. What, then, is the alternative? * * * They want a stimulant; and in default of any other, they turn to 'strong drink,' and go into the haunts of licentiousness. They walk in 'the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.' They cannot shift from themselves the guilt which they incur; but surely the ruin of their souls is chargeable, in no slight degree, upon *that system which furnishes at once the temptation and the excuse.*"

"It has already been said, that it is customary to keep shops open to a later hour on Saturday night than on any other; conse-

quently, the Sabbath morning is used as a period of rest in bed, to a much later hour than any other; and thus its first hours are mis-employed, and afford fit preparation for a corresponding mode of spending the remainder."

"Late hours prevent reading on other days, and therefore *he* reads the newspaper or novel on the Sabbath. *They* prevent taking rational recreation at proper times, and therefore *he* takes compensation by visiting the tavern or worse places, on that day which we are commanded to '*keep holy.*' And that very day which should bring with it to his spirit only '*airs from heaven,*' does in reality bring only '*blasts from hell.*'"

From these extracts, the horrors and cruelties of the Late Hour System will be apparent. It is true, that the statements here made, refer chiefly to London, but the evils that prevail there exist—to a smaller we admit—but still to a melancholy extent in other districts. It appears from the last report of the Drapers' Association, presented at the annual meeting in January last, that tracts and circulars had been issued in the Metropolis, drawing attention to the evils arising from evening business, to the buyer, as well as to the seller; and the report states that, in consequence, the number of evening purchasers has been considerably diminished. We recommend a similar plan of operation in the provincial towns of the three kingdoms; believing that thus the chief inducement to the continuance of late hours will be removed.

But only a part of this reform has been accomplished, when the Late Hour System has been done away. Leisure—even the leisure of the Sabbath—when not properly employed, generally becomes an evil; and in large towns, what evils may arise, if young men, when freed from the engagements of business, have no profitable means of spending the precious hours of relaxation which philanthropy has obtained for them! We are told, that already in Belfast, the taverns are accommodating their hours and their entertainments to the increased leisure that has been given in some establishments to the apprentices and shopmen; and already therefore, we contend, should those interested in the intellectual and moral improvement of the public be devising plans for the profitable occupation of evening hours. The Mechanics' Institute has been for years in a dormant state—occasionally, indeed, exhibiting symptoms of activity, but anon dropping asleep again—partly, we believe, because those for whose

benefit it was established, are deficient in the preliminary education that would fit them for benefiting by it; and partly, because men overwrought and harassed by worldly difficulties, as so many of our workmen and artisans are, are not disposed to engage in intellectual pursuits. Let the Mechanics' Institute rise up in a new form, and, if necessary, under a new name; let it hold forth inducements for the cultivation of the sciences, and the pursuit of literature; and thus bring a different class of our townsmen under mental and moral culture. Although Belfast has now little claim to be called the Athens of Ireland, it does possess many who are capable—and we shall not doubt that they are willing—to direct such plans. To the members of our Natural History Society, and our other literary institutions, we look—to them is presented the opportunity—on them, we had almost said, devolves the responsibility—of consummating a reform which has been so benevolently begun.

“RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION SOCIETY.”

Belfast, 5th February, 1844.

DEAR SIR,—In the *Bible Christian* for January, I addressed a few observations to you in relation to the “Religious Conversation Society,” lately formed, in which I briefly noticed some of the leading advantages which, it appeared to me, such a Society was calculated to produce. The experience I have since gained from attendance at its meetings, has confirmed me still more strongly as to its utility; and has further convinced me, that it will be of material service in drawing the members of our congregations more closely together, and in awakening our sympathies, as well as increasing our zeal for the advancement of pure and spiritual religion. As there is a decided aversion to assimilating the Society in any degree to that of a “debating” one, there is no danger of a disputatious spirit being engendered, which, I apprehend, was the chief objection to its formation; nor have I witnessed a symptom of any other objectionable kind.

We have already had several original essays upon subjects bearing on *practical* religion, such as “The Spirit of Christianity,” “The Causes of Sectarianism,” &c.; as also

very judiciously chosen extracts from the master spirits of our Church—all of which were highly instructive and interesting, particularly as they were followed by animated and appropriate remarks from some of the members present. As yet, only a few have joined in the conversation, amongst whom, however, I am happy to say, were several ladies—but there is little doubt of the number increasing rapidly, as the formality and diffidence naturally attendant upon our first meetings wear away. I am much gratified in being able to furnish you with the following extract from the *Inquirer* of the 20th January, being part of an editorial article on the “Taunton Conference Address” to the Unitarian churches of the West of England. This address, by the bye, has attracted much attention, and many points are suggested in it, which, if acted upon, will prove essentially serviceable to our cause. The able and estimable editor of that Journal, it will be seen, warmly approves of societies being formed, such as ours, in connexion with every congregation; and as his remarks upon the subject appear peculiarly applicable to us, under the circumstances in which our society was formed, I hope they may, in conjunction with other considerations, serve to allay the apprehensions of such persons as may still be inclined to question the usefulness of such societies.

Before concluding, I would respectfully call upon the senior members of our congregations to *strengthen and encourage* the growing zeal arising amongst us, *more than they have hitherto done*, and in order to do so effectually, I think they will admit that they should, at any rate, take a *share* in the promotion of the good work, by lending their names or otherwise assisting.

“We have mentioned among the topics introduced into the Taunton address, a resolution of the Conference, recommending meetings in the week for religious improvement. This is a subject of great importance. We have a strong conviction of the utility of such meetings, but a good deal must obviously depend on the proper adaptation of the plans to local circumstances and wants. Where a pretty numerous and mixed assembly can be collected, a chapel meeting is the only admissible plan, and this has considerable advantages; yet there are cases in which a social meeting is found preferable. The chapel meetings should always be introduced by prayer; but we are satisfied that with the views which prevail amongst us, respecting the divine nature and government, and the true character of social devotion, any attempt to imitate the *prayer*

meetings amongst those called orthodox, must be a complete failure. The time is sometimes profitably employed in the reading of works not accessible to members generally, and calculated to suggest interesting remarks; but discussion of important subjects, so as to afford a free opportunity for questions, and for the expression of opinion, seems the appropriate occupation. The subjects would naturally at times be taken from doubtful questions of Scriptural interpretation, or religious controversy; as frequently, perhaps, from the applications of religion to practical morals and social improvement; and with these might be occasionally intermixed anything tending to cherish knowledge and love of the works of God and the laws of nature. The danger which might be apprehended from such meetings is the encouragement of a disputatious spirit and a love of display. We do not recommend assimilating such meetings with debating societies, but we are sure that assisting inquiring minds in their endeavours to understand the Scriptures, and to acquire various knowledge, is the true why to guard them against vacillation or scepticism; and in whatever degree facility in expressing their thoughts to others is acquired by such exercises, a most important advantage is obtained with as little risk of any attendant evil as is possible.

"We apprehend that such meetings are always interesting and agreeable to great numbers, and that from this circumstance, and the familiar manner in which they frequently bring together the members of the same religious society, they are most efficacious in strengthening the bonds of union, and maintaining a congregation in a flourishing condition."

I am, Sir, yours,

VINDEX.

BELFAST UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

At the annual meeting of the Unitarian Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge, held at Belfast in October last, a motion was made and adopted; to the following effect—

"That we earnestly request the Committee now about to be appointed, to take into its consideration at the earliest possible moment, the propriety of making a sustained and vigorous effort, to introduce the knowledge of Unitarian Christian principles into such quarters of the province as may seem ripe for their reception, by means of missionary preaching."

The Committee then appointed have given a large amount of attention to that subject, and although they have not yet been able to fix on a properly qualified missionary preacher, they have, to a certain extent, paved the way for future operations.

It has been suggested, that not a little might be done, in the meantime, by individual effort on the part of *laymen*, to pioneer the way for the future operations of a missionary when appointed.

The Committee are aware that there are individuals and families, professing our views, or favourable to them, and others ill-informed on, though not disinclined to examine into their truth, who, from residing at a distance from Unitarian places of worship, are in danger of lapsing into error or indifference in the one case, or of remaining ignorant of that which, had they the opportunity, they would willingly investigate, in the other.

To meet such cases a plan has been proposed, of the desirableness and practicability of which, the Committee are anxious to have the opinion of individuals and families who may be situated as supposed, and who would feel inclined to co-operate in the undertaking.

It is proposed that communications be opened with such parties and the parent society, which will tend to keep alive their interest in the cause.

It is recommended that such individuals and families should have regular weekly worship *at home*, where the numbers are *small*, or in a *hired room*, where individuals residing in the neighbourhood would consent to meet and co-operate.

That to enable such small worshipping societies to conduct the services effectually and beneficially, the parent society should furnish, for their use, printed sermons, tracts, &c. which might also form libraries for lending to inquirers.

That each society should report their progress annually to the parent society.

That eventually the society's missionary should stately visit such localities, preaching and encouraging the members, and when deemed advisable, taking the opportunity of *more publicly* promulgating our views.

The stated clergy, connected with our body, might occasionally visit, with advantage, such localities as are nearest to the scene of their labours.

It is hoped, that by such arrangements much good might be effected to individuals and to the body generally; and in throwing out these suggestions for consideration, the writer will be happy to receive communications, contain-

ing such local information as may assist him to render the plan more practicable, and enable him to recommend it more effectually to the notice of the Committee.

The writer may add, that the plan has been generally approved of by the Committee, and but for a variety of engagements, at present, it would have been taken up by the clerical members; as, however, it has met with their approval, it is not deemed *premature*, to have the opinions of those most deeply interested in the matter.

Communications, *free*, addressed "S." to be left at the Depository, 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast, will be esteemed a favour.

S.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE JEWS' LAMENT.

The sun shines fair on Judah's land,
 But Judah's children are not there:
 No priests before the altar stand,
 No hour of sacrifice and prayer—
 The house—the cloud where glory shone,
 The oracles of God—are gone!
 The breeze blows sweet from Gilead still,
 And flocks repose by Carmel side;
 The dews fall soft on Zion's hill,
 As in the days of Zion's pride.
 But David's harp lies all unstrung,
 And Zion's sweetest songs unsung!
 Mount Lebanon is bathed in light,
 And Jordan's lakes reflect the ray;
 And when the moon leads on the night,
 The night is sweeter than the day—
 Where prophets met by Shilo's streams,
 And angels came to Jacob's dreams!
 Our holy land—our promised land!
 Its lovely places all were ours:
 The sceptre's passed from Judah's hand;
 And o'er our palaces and towers—
 And o'er our fathers' prostrate graves,
 The Crescent of the Moslem waves!

By Mamre's oak our fathers lie;
O could our dust but mix with theirs!
The Gentiles' scoffs we could defy—
Insults and wrongs the Hebrew bears:
But hopeless *here* we yield our breath
In all the bitterness of death!

ICABOD.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

A KISS FOR A BLOW.

WHEN I lived in Boston, I was one of the city school committee. I used to visit some of the public schools of the city almost every day, and spend a few minutes in each school, talking to the children on peace and temperance. The children understood that, when I came to the schools, they were at liberty to ask me my opinions on these subjects. They generally had some questions to ask.

One day I visited one of the infant schools. There were about fifty children in it, between four and eight years of age.

"Children," said I, "has any of you a question to ask to-day?"—"Please to tell us," said a little boy, "what is meant by '*overcoming evil with good*'?"—"I am glad," said I, "you have asked that question; for I love to talk to you about peace, and to show you how to settle all difficulties without fighting."

I then tried to show them what the precept meant, and how to apply it, and carry it out. While I tried to think of something to make it plain to the children, the following incident occurred.

A boy about seven years of age, and his sister about five years of age, sat near me. As I was talking, George doubled up his fist, and struck his sister on her head; as unkind and cruel brothers often do. She was angry in a moment, and raised her hand at once to strike him in return. The teacher saw her, and said, "*Mary, you had better kiss your brother.*" Mary dropped her hand, and looked up at the teacher, as if she did not fully understand her. She had never been taught to return good for evil.

She thought that if her brother struck her, she of course had a right to strike in return. She had always been taught to act on this cruel maxim. Her teacher looked kindly at her, and at George, and said again, "My dear Mary, you had better kiss your brother. See how angry and unhappy he looks!" Mary looked at her brother. He looked sullen and wretched. Her resentment was soon gone, and love for her brother returned to her heart. She threw both her arms about his neck, and kissed him! The poor boy was wholly unprepared for such a kind return for his blow. He could not endure the generous affection of his sister. His feelings were touched, and he burst out crying. His gentle sister took the corner of her apron, and wiped away his tears, and sought to comfort him by saying, with endearing sweetness and generous affection, "*Don't cry, George; you did not hurt me much.*" But he only wept the more. No wonder. It was enough to make anybody weep.

But why did George weep? Poor little fellow! Little did he dream that his sister would give him such a sweet return for his wicked blow. Would he have wept, if his sister had struck him as he had struck her? Not he. By kissing him as she did, she made him feel more acutely than if she had beaten him black and blue. By striking him again, she would not have made him feel sorry at all. It was that sweet, sisterly kiss—that gentle act of wiping away his tears with her apron—that generous and anger-killing affection, that led her to excuse him, and seek to comfort him by saying, "*Don't cry, George; you did not hurt me much*"—these things made him weep. It would make anybody weep, to receive such kind and generous treatment from one whom he had injured. No man could withstand it.

A KISS FOR A BLOW! All the school saw, at once, what was meant by overcoming evil with good; and they needed no further instruction on the subject. They never will forget it. Had Mary struck her brother, there had been a fight. It was prevented by her kiss.

When others strike you, or do anything to you which you think an injury, always do as sweet little Mary did. Give a kiss for a blow, and there will be no trouble. They will take care how they wrong you in any way, when they are once sure that the injuries they do you

will not be returned. Though George was the older and the larger, and could strike the harder, yet Mary conquered him. George's large, strong body, his muscular arm, and hard blows, were not a match for the strong love and sweet kiss of Mary. If George had had the body of a giant, or the strength of a million of men in his arm, Mary's sweet love and kiss, and those gentle but heart-piercing words, "Don't cry, George; you did not hurt me much," would have conquered them all. What could poor George do? If he had had all the arms and soldiers in the world to help him in his attack upon Mary, conduct such as hers would have conquered them all.

Dear children, arm yourselves with Mary's weapons; throw away your anger, your sullen looks, your provoking nicknames, your clenched fists, and furious blows, and take the sweet love and soft words of little Mary; then go forth to meet your enemies, and you may be sure of an easy and bloodless victory.

H. C. WRIGHT.

INTELLIGENCE.

DR. EDGAR'S LETTERS.—MR. JOHN SHANNON.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—In one of Dr Edgar's letters to the Rev. J. Scott Porter, published in the *Whig* of the 9th January, there occurred a few words, which appeared to many to be designed to throw suspicion upon my character. I considered it due to myself, and to the religious body with which I am now connected, to endeavour to ascertain from Dr. Edgar, whether he intended any personal reflection against me. With this view, I wrote to him the two following letters, without receiving any answer. My prospects in life depending, in a great measure, on my literary attainments, and an unsullied moral character, I think it unkind in Dr. Edgar to use ambiguous language, calculated, perhaps unintentially on his part, to injure me, without giving any explanation. As your periodical is the accredited organ of the Unitarian body, and as this is a matter which more particularly concerns them, I respectfully request that you will insert these letters, when they, having the matter fairly and fully before them, will be able to judge between him and me.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN SHANNON.

["1, *Rosshoro' Place, Cromac Road,*

January 12th, 1844.

"REV. SIR,—I perceive in one of your letters to the Rev. J. Scott Porter, published in the *Whig* of Tuesday last, the following words: 'It cannot be that your one convert (keep quiet on that small point, I beg of you).' Finding that some persons look upon this parenthesis as conveying an insinuation against my moral or literary character, I beg respectfully to know whether you intended it as any personal reflection against, Rev. Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN SHANNON.

"To Rev. Dr. Edgar."

"1, *Rosshoro' Place, Cromac Road,*

February 2nd, 1844.

"REV. SIR,—I take the liberty of calling your attention to the note which I wrote to you, dated January 12th, respectfully requesting you to inform me, whether you intended to cast any personal reflection on me, in a parenthetical clause of your letter to the Rev. J. Scott Porter. Having, myself, left the letter in your house, I can only account for your not answering it, by supposing the circumstance to have escaped your memory. In renewing my request, I trust you will consider it an act of justice and kindness done to me, to give an immediate answer. I remain, Rev. Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN SHANNON."

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. GEORGE M'ADAM.

On the departure from Belfast of Mr. George M'Adam, who has acted as superintendent of the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, since the foundation of the school, the teachers thought it incumbent on them to mark their high sense of his zealous and most efficient services, by requesting his acceptance of a valuable set of books; which was accordingly presented to him, with a suitable address, at the teachers' monthly meeting, on Tuesday, January 16, 1844. Mr. M'Adam replied in very appropriate and impressive terms, expressing his regret at the necessity of retiring from an office in which his heart had been deeply engaged; his continued interest in the cause of Sunday-school education; his high regard for those with whom he had been engaged as a fellow-labourer; and his grateful acceptance of their valuable and handsome present. Want of space prevents us from inserting the address and Mr. M'Adam's reply.

SOIREE AT ABERDEEN.

The members of the Unitarian Congregation, Aberdeen, along with their friends, held a soiree in this church on the evening of Wednesday, Jan. 17. 156 persons were present. The chair was occupied by the Rev. J. H. Hope, minister of the congregation. After opening the proceedings with prayer, the chairman shortly addressed the meeting. He stated the object of meetings such as the present. They were simply designed to promote individual happiness. But he commended them on other grounds. They were calculated to make the members of the congregation better acquainted with and more endeared to one another, and tended in the happiest manner to engender greater zeal and a more steady adherence to the sacred cause in which they were embarked; and without whose greater diffusion he contended that true peace, happiness, and freedom, would not be enjoyed by the great bulk of the children of men. He was subsequently followed by Messrs. Sudbury, M'Donald, Ross, Stratton, Morrison, Proctor, Adams, and the Rev. James Forrest of Greenock. The assembly was enlivened by the recitations of Mr. John Tawn, and by some excellent and appropriate pieces of music from the choir. The meeting was finally closed with prayer, after having spent four hours in pleasant and rational amusement.

UNITARIAN CHAPEL, STRANGWAYS, MANCHESTER.

The anniversary of this place of worship, the members of which formerly met in the Greengate chapel, Salford, was celebrated on Sunday, the 14th January, when two excellent discourses were delivered by the Rev. J. Martineau, of Liverpool; and collections, amounting to upwards of £31, made in liquidation of the debt on the chapel. On Monday evening a tea-party was held in the school-room under the chapel, which was decorated in a tasteful and appropriate style. A numerous and respectable company sat down to tea; the tables being headed by several ladies of the congregation, who were assisted by stewards, some of them divinity students in Manchester New College. After tea, the Rev. J. Martineau occupied the chair; and on the platform were the following gentlemen:—The Rev. Dr. Beard, minister of the congregation; the Revds. William Turner, formerly of Newcastle; John James Tayler, of Upper Brook-street, Manchester; Francis Howarth, of Bury; H. Green, of Knutsford; Edward Higginson and George Lee, both of Hull; and James Heywood, Esq. F.R.S. Acresfield, near Manchester. The Chairman commenced this portion of the proceedings by a brief but interesting address, in which he adverted to the circumstances under which he now met the congregation, as compared with a previous occasion of a similar nature. In alluding to the great changes which had taken place since that time, he mentioned, in the most feeling manner, the recent death of George

William Wood, Esq. and of Mr. John Edward Taylor, the proprietor and editor of the *Manchester Guardian*; the one in his place as a member of parliament, and the other by the exercise of an important control over the press, as having advocated the great principles of civil and religious liberty. He also noticed the death of some of the great and good men of another land—Channing, Ware, and Greenwood—and of our own Henry Acton; all of whom, either by their moral character or by their intellectual powers, as displayed in their lives and writings, exercised, and are still exercising, an influence more or less extensive on the improvement and happiness of mankind. Mr. M. concluded by proposing “The Queen: may she reign in the hearts of a happy and truly Christian people.” The Rev. Dr. Beard submitted the following to the notice of the meeting: “That the best thanks of the congregation are due, and are hereby tendered, to those of its members who, by their gratuitous services, have so largely contributed to promote the cause of education and the interests of religion in this vicinity. The speaker commenced his observations by remarking, that he had frequently described this as a working congregation; because its members, not even excepting the minister, gained their bread by their daily exertions;—because, though following the avocations of the world during six days of the week, many of them found time to make efforts to do good during the evenings and a great portion of Sunday; for he did not conceive that the evangelising and the improving of the condition of the people ought to be confined to the preaching of the gospel. Dr. Beard made a few remarks on the general subject of education, first noticing the two day-schools connected with the chapel. The defeat of the Education Bill, lately produced in Parliament, had been followed by a large increase of effort throughout the country in favour of education for the children of the poor. But where, he asked, was the corresponding effort on the part of Unitarians? He saw no agitation by our body for the purpose of increasing that educational movement which already existed amongst other bodies of Christians. He did not believe that this want of exertion proceeded from any apathy on the part of Unitarians; for they had always been the friends of education. It must, therefore, arise from indisposition to be influenced by the sectarian motives which seem to have originated the exertions of others. The reverend speaker concluded by stating his opinion, that popular education, in its full extent, could be effected only by voluntary aid, combined with the assistance of the State. The Chairman observed, that in consequence of some of Dr. Beard’s observations, he felt called on to make a statement which he otherwise would not have done: That gentleman complained of the backwardness of Unitarians in the cause of education; but he would now state to them that a committee had been formed in Liverpool for the purpose of making inquiries into the present state of education, and of combining the efforts of the whole Unitarian body in the promotion of that cause. The committee intended to make inquiries with regard to the

state of education in other districts, and then to prepare a statement, to be corrected according to the suggestions of their friends, and made the basis of a large system of education. A variety of sentiments, with suitable addresses, followed, from the Revds. J. J. Tayler, F. Howarth, Geo. Lee, Edward Higginson, E. Green, and others; and after an unanimous vote of thanks to the Chairman, the company separated.

CONTINENTAL INTELLIGENCE.

The religious intelligence which comes from abroad shows the unsettled state of the Christian world, and the earnestness with which the disciples of different communions are pressing their opinions, together with the uneasiness which actually exists in the bosom of every communion. In Europe many signs indicate the approach of a more earnest struggle than has been seen in our day, between the principles on which Catholicism and Protestantism are respectively based. In France particularly, while the Romish Church seems to be regaining lost power, we are told that there is a deep, though but half intelligent, perhaps as yet scarcely intelligible, cry for the true salvation. The new developments which the religious sentiment is continually assuming in Germany, under the forms either of theology or philosophy, render it difficult to determine what is the position of the religious mind in that country; but we think it clear that rationalism, or, more properly speaking, supernaturalism, has reached its aphelion, and henceforth will be seen approaching "the sun of righteousness." The state of things in Geneva we have for some time watched with great interest.—The increase of Catholics, by immigration, into the canton, has been such as justly to alarm the Protestant inhabitants, lest the preponderance of numbers, and with this the balance of power, should ere long be found on the Catholic side. The increase of the "Evangelical," or Trinitarian party tends also to weaken the relative strength of the Unitarian Church.—*Boston Miscellany.*

NOTE TO THE EDITOR.

THE Editor of the *Bible Christian* will oblige the writer by inserting the following:—

February 12th, 1844.

In reference to an address presented to the Rev. William Heron on his leaving the neighbourhood of Ballyclare, and published in the *Bible Christian* so long ago as April last, but which I have only seen lately,—I beg leave to say, that, although I contributed, in order to present Mr. Heron with a token of regard on that occasion, yet my name was published at the end of that address without my consent.

JOHN OWENS.

OBITUARY.

DIED—On Friday morning the 19th of January, at her residence, Queen's Arms Hotel, Newtownlimavady, Miss BENN, in the 69th year of her age. She was a woman of good understanding, and very gentle manners. Owing to her very unobtrusive disposition, few knew her intelligence or her worth; but those few can testify to the excellent qualities of her head and heart. A Unitarian from conviction, she remained firm in her opinions to the last; and the doctrines and consolations of her faith, sustained and strengthened her throughout a tedious and wasting illness. If a "holy life" is a good preparative for a "happy death," her transition to another world must have been peaceful and full of promise. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Died—on the 1st of February, at her house in Donegall-square North, Miss SMITH, after a tedious illness, in the 70th year of her age. This is the simple record of the departure of a lady so highly esteemed by her relatives and friends, that they may reasonably expect some more permanent record, or (for what can be permanent in this changeful world?) at least some transient tribute that will not allow to pass, in apparent neglect, so rare a combination of cheerful enjoyment and hearty participation in the happiness of those around her, with such a tenderness of sympathy towards those in suffering—such a willing and assiduous watchfulness at the bed of sickness and of death as we seldom see—a more than parental love and care towards a dear brother's trust—an alertness of personal exertion, and a liberality in pecuniary aid to all benevolent designs and charitable purposes,—all cemented by a warmth of piety, a steadiness of religious principle, an anxiety for the prevalence of religious feeling, and an ardent zeal for the welfare of that cause of religious liberty and religious truth that was most dear to her heart. The fruit of such a temper and disposition, she reaped in a patience of resignation and a fortitude of endurance, during a long and painful sickness, that enabled her to keep her thoughts and her affections firmly fixed on the blessed hope of happiness in her glorified Redeemer's presence.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We regret that the article on the Northern Sunday-school Association came too late for our present number. It will not be out of time, however, in our next.

We wish our Correspondents to understand, that we are unwilling, except under very peculiar circumstances to publish articles of Intelligence *at length* in the *Bible Christian*, which may have appeared several weeks before in the local newspapers.

The First Number of the *Juvenile Miscellany*, and *Carpenter's Family Prayers*, have been received. We beg the indulgence of various Correspondents, whose valued contributions we have not yet been able to publish.

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the Rev. C. J. McAlester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE

BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. IV.

APRIL, 1844.

VOL. VII.

THE HOUSE OF PRAYER.

It has been stated, and we believe with truth, that there is no people on the face of the earth without some form of religion. It may be characterised by the grossest superstition, or fraught with the most debasing cruelties; but still it is the development of that principle in our nature which draws us to a power higher than ourselves; and it illustrates the important fact, that we were intended to be religious beings. Him after whom the nations of the earth, in all their modes of worship, are seeking, Jesus has revealed; and him whom men had ignorantly worshipped, the gospel of Jesus has declared. How consoling and sanctifying is Christian worship, in which man, frail and sinful, bows before the all-mighty and all-merciful in penitence and filial trust! How sweet to the mind of the disciple are the peace and solemnity of the house of prayer, when the Sabbath comes, and the cessation of toil, and strife, and pleasure, prompts us to repair to the courts of our God. The courts of our God indeed are everywhere—all nature around us is one magnificent temple for the worship of him who reared and garnished it. Yet, dearer to the Christian than sea and sky, mountain and vale and wood, is the house of prayer on the holy days. It signifies nothing whether that house has been consecrated by the forms of a Greek, a Romish, or an English ritual. There is a consecration infinitely more impressive to the religious mind—that which arises from the remembrance of holy hours that have been spent, and beloved friends that have been met within its walls. *The place where prayer was wont to be made*—that was the consecration which the early disciples felt; and the place where we seek the spirit of devotion, and unite with brethren in supplication and thanksgiving, becomes more precious to

K

the heart, than the most splendid church with which we have no association of religious experience.

In every age the pious mind has taken delight in the house of prayer; devotion that may have flagged, and almost died out, is here revived; charity, which the selfish struggles of the world had weakened, is here renewed; the pride of riches is checked; and the heart which adversity or affliction has oppressed, is reconciled to its lot. The prayer that is uttered by one, is caught into the hearts of many, and the supplication of each is wafted on the aspirations of all, to a throne of grace. Shut out for a season from the world, and laying aside its conflicts and passions, the thoughts of all are fixed on their God—their Saviour—that grave to which the stream of time is hurrying them on—and that heaven which is the home of the immortal spirit. It *must* be good for man to be there. In no scene on earth could we engage which is better calculated to enlarge our charity, subdue our pride, exalt our hopes, and lift us to communion with our God.

The prevalent neglect of the house of prayer, on the part of many connected with our denomination, must arise from the want of a religious feeling, and from mistaken views, which we fear are very prevalent, respecting the nature of public worship.

As we have cast away those forms and ceremonies which, while they give an outward attraction, tend to lessen the spirituality of the service, and have adopted the simplicity of Presbyterianism, our worship becomes dull, profitless, and unmeaning, if the heart be not engaged. Hence it happens, that where the spirit of devotion does not exist, attendance in the house of prayer is irksome, and perhaps, in some cases, is only continued because it is customary, and is countenanced by public opinion. The attendance of many is, in consequence, very irregular. The most trifling circumstance is sufficient to keep them at home. A few drops of rain; a dark cloud; the call of a friend; a headache, probably arising from having slept longer than usual on the Sunday morning; and other such excuses, which would be deemed no justification for being absent from the daily business of life, are very sufficient to justify them for being absent from the house of prayer. The secret is, that they feel no interest in going thither, and they are glad of anything

which will afford them even such an apology for staying at home.

Sometimes the minister is made the scapegoat to bear whatever fault may be in the matter. His manner, voice, language, may not be in accordance with their ideal of what a minister should be. It is true, that one person may be more generally acceptable in the pulpit than another, and his services may be even more instructive; but the benefit to be derived from waiting on God in the house of prayer, depends more on ourselves than on the minister. We are accustomed to throw all the weight and responsibility on the preacher. This arises from mistaken views of the nature of the service. The acceptableness of our worship depends, not on the prayers the minister offers, and the passage of Scripture he reads and expounds, but on the prayer *we* offer, and the portion of God's word, read from the pulpit, to which *we* listen, and on which *we* ponder. If we go to the house of prayer in a proper spirit of devotion, the services of almost any minister may be interesting and profitable; if we go without such a spirit, no minister's services can be profitable, though a man of genius and eloquence may sometimes interest our mind, or gratify our taste. The relation subsisting, in this particular, between the minister and his hearers, has been thus happily illustrated by Jacob Abbott:—

"A farmer sends his boys into a field to spend the day in work. He tells them what to do for an hour, and says, that after that time he shall send a man to explain to them how they are to proceed through the day. The boys go on with their work, until at length the expected messenger appears. He begins to tell them how the land is to be ploughed, or in what way the father wishes the seed to be put into the ground. The boys listen to him a minute or two, until one, perceiving some oddity in the man's manner, bursts into a laugh; another sits down on a green bank under a tree, and gradually falls into a state of drowsy insensibility; a third looks away with vacant countenance upon the hills and mountains around, utterly regardless of the message. The boys consequently do not learn what their father wishes them to do, and do not do it; and when night comes, and they are called to account for the labours of the day, they try to justify themselves with this preposterous excuse: 'Why,' they say to their father, 'the man you sent us was not an interesting man, and so we did not pay any attention to his message. He had no talent at making his mode of explanation novel and striking, and so we did not listen to it.' 'I could not possibly fix my attention,' says

one. 'He was a very sleepy talker,' says another, 'I could not keep awake.' 'He was dressed so,' says a third, 'and he had such a tone that I could not help laughing at him.'

"Such are the excuses which many persons give for not giving heed to religious instruction on the Sabbath. They try to throw off all responsibility upon the minister; and if he does not awaken, by the power of his genius, an interest in their minds, they consider themselves entirely excused from feeling any."

Many, by their want of punctuality in attending on public worship, evince an indifference to the introductory portions of the service, which are always devotional, and seem to think that they are in good time, if they be only there to hear the sermon. The sermon never was the most important portion of the service—now it is certainly the least important. Other vehicles of instruction have taken its place, and the Sunday School for the young, and the press for all, have opened wider channels for the communication of religious knowledge. The pulpit is still, we trust, usefully employed to enforce Christian duties, and illustrate Christian doctrines; but the hearer is frequently as well informed as the preacher, and if he only attend the house of God, as he would attend the lecture-room of a scientific institution, he must be often disappointed, and he seldom can be benefited in a religious view. When a man comes late into the house of God, we may generally understand that the period allotted to the service is too long for his taste, or that he comes not to worship with his brethren, but to hear a sermon; and the phraseology that prevails among Presbyterians generally, who, in speaking of the house of God, do not say that they have been at worship, or at prayer, but "*at sermon*," plainly shows the prevalent error that exists respecting public worship.

The services of the sanctuary will be rendered more interesting and profitable, if we repair to it in a devout frame of mind,—“keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God;” if we fix our minds on serious things while we continue within its walls, endeavouring to join in all the exercises, and to meditate on the Scripture that may be read, and abstracting our thoughts, as much as possible, from worldly things; and if we strive to perpetuate whatever serious impressions have been made, when we leave its sacred precincts, not dissipating them

by trifling occupations, but cherishing and strengthening them by pious converse, meditation, or prayer.

If it is our duty to wait on God in the house of prayer, it is our duty to attend regularly, punctually, and devoutly: to fix our thoughts more on the object than the mode of worship; more on the subject than the manner of instruction. Happy will it be for our church when this duty is better understood and more generally practised.

SIMPLE THOUGHTS ON THE NECESSITY OF PERSONAL HOLINESS.

THE apostle John, in his gospel, at the twenty-eighth verse of the eighteenth chapter, has the following—"And they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, *lest they should be defiled*, but that they might eat the passover." And in the appendix to Murphy's Tacitus (page 518), we find a farther proof of the presumption and superstition of the Jews in the following passage:—"The Jews who escaped the sword fled in dismay and terror to the temple, which they considered as a safe asylum, still convinced that a sanctuary, of which the God of Abraham was the protector, would never yield to the Roman arms." How strikingly—indeed how awfully—does the spirit of these two passages harmonize! It would be almost impossible to peruse the latter without the mind recurring to this scrupulosity of the priest and Pharisee, at the time of which the apostle gives his record. We find in each the same blind superstition, the same reverence for places and ceremonies, united with the same hardness of heart, and absence of every moral feeling; the same utter ignorance of the true character of that pure Being whom they thus pretend to honour and trust.

The priest and the Pharisee are far too holy to enter that judgment-hall, where, by their machinations, Pilate is about to condemn "the holy one and the just;" and where the voice of the crowd, by their instigation, resounds with the cry, "Not this man but Barabbas!" But they dare not enter this judgment-hall, lest they being defiled be found unworthy to keep the most sacred of their religious festivals! Oh! blind Pharisee! wilt thou come to partake of the spotless lamb—the memorial of your ran-

son—the type of your Messiah—with this blood-spot on your heart? Will it escape the eye of Him whom thus thou wouldst dare to mock?

In the same spirit of wilful ignorance and infatuation the leaders (we might almost be excused in saying the demoniacal leaders) of the Jewish nation, at the time of its miserable overthrow, dared to presume that Jehovah would not forsake the temple in which he once delighted; to presume that the God of Abraham would still count as his people these depraved descendants of “the father of the faithful.” But they were taught to know that “God is able to raise up children unto Abraham.” They were obliged to learn, if indeed they were capable of learning any truth, that the holy God would not accept the formal services of men who had made themselves execrable, nor own that edifice for his house of prayer where such men offered sacrifice. If a temple be raised to the honour of God, it must be the resort of men who go there to nourish the soul with holy contemplations and sacred instructions, and whose walk through life is consistent with their profession; but not for the hardened sinner to count his prayers as an offset to his sins.

We see, then, into what an error the soul of man may be led by imagining that an outward reverence for sacred ceremonies and sacred places can be acceptable when the heart is unclean. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;” and we may take the text on the reversed side—wo unto the heart stained by sin, for it cannot see God. Oh! blind priests and Pharisees! Oh! blind and perverse leaders and captains of the Jewish people! Ye are long passed away, and men who think about the matter, marvel at your awful daring—your infamous deeds! Are there none actuated by the like spirit in the present day? Few, we trust, so bad. But, may not some be found who, filled with the spirit of party even in religion, imagine that to belong to this or that church is sufficient earnest of their salvation, though their tempers be ungenerous, their hearts covetous, and alien from every generous emotion.

Where did the great spirit of Jehovah rest, when it fled from the temple, in former days filled with its presence? The universal answer to the question is, In the church of Christ assuredly. But where is the church of Christ—who

will guide us thither? One says, "Come with me"—and another cries, "I will show you the road; I was born into it." "Nay, but I have studied for myself!" The church of Christ is split into a thousand parts; the leader of one part crieth to his brother, "It is not in your tabernacle the great Jehovah reigns;" whilst he indignantly retorts, "Assuredly it is not in thine." Where then? The Scriptures alone can tell. "Thou desirest above all temples the upright heart and pure." In this there is no sectarianism—no compromising with the necessity of personal holiness.

M. B.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY.

ARE we accountable for our opinions? No, says the Unitarian; and yet he considers it his duty to "prove all things, and to hold fast that, and that only, which is right." Yes, says the Trinitarian; and yet resolves to believe as his fathers believed, positively refusing to examine anything at variance with his own sentiments. Such is an example of the inconsistencies frequently observable in the conduct of religious sects and parties.

If we be accountable for our opinions, surely it is our duty to act, precisely as Unitarians act, or as a free inquirer would act, respecting them. We should refuse to take anything upon trust. The evidence for our sentiments should be carefully sifted by us. Their accordance with the original meaning of Holy Writ should be studiously investigated. As the human mind is fallible, we should labour to divest ourselves, as far as possible, of all prejudices and partialities for a system, as nothing is more calculated to thwart the mind in its pursuit of truth. Sentiments that are opposed to our own, should be most carefully examined, and their opposing evidences weighed impartially, to see on which side the balance will preponderate. If we be accountable for our opinions, nothing should be rashly admitted, without evidence. It will not do to believe a doctrine for no other reason than that our fathers believed it. In that case, our fathers will not be answerable for us. "Each man will bear his own burden;" so that we should be fully persuaded of it in our own minds. Do Trinitarians in general do this? Do they compare together, and with the Holy Scriptures, their own

sentiments and those of Unitarians, without prejudice? Are they not afraid to doubt their faith? Do they not even refuse to read anything that might tend to unsettle their opinions? If so, their own principle of accountability is the severest censure they could pronounce upon their conduct. Holding themselves responsible to the Great Head of the Church for the truth or erroneousness of their sentiments; holding even that an error in faith may prove destructive of final happiness; they obstinately refuse to sift the wheat from the chaff, or to take any means for arriving at the truth. Well does the apostle say, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Now, that we are accountable for our opinions, I mean to prove, though I will not go the length of affirming that an error in opinion will, of itself, endanger our final happiness. The formation of our faith is a duty, like any other duty, most incumbent on us. Christ required his hearers to "search the Scriptures;" to use their own judgment in determining the question whether his gospel were of God. Paul commands believers to "prove all things." And the duty is not more obligatory, by the letter and the spirit of Christian precepts, than by the very nature of the case. What are opinions, especially religious opinions? In fact, the seeds, or roots of all moral and Christian, or of all bigoted, improper, and unchristian actions. As says the poet,—

"Action treads the path
In which opinion says he follows good,
Or flies from evil."

I do not say that all Calvinists are bigots—far from it; neither are all Unitarians truly liberal in their feelings; but I do say, that Calvinism as naturally prompts to bigotry and intolerance, as Unitarianism to charity and benevolence. If then we are accountable for our conduct, we must also be accountable for the opinions or sentiments that prompted it. Wrong opinions once kindled the fires of Smithfield, and enacted all the cruelties of the Inquisition. So that it is as much the duty of every Christian to keep the mind's eye open to the light of truth, and to use every means to inform his judgment, as it is to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with his God."

Besides, Providence has given to us all the means of

furnishing right opinions, at least on the leading doctrines of Christianity. We have the words of truth in our hands. We have the sayings and doings, the doctrines and precepts of the Great Teacher faithfully recorded. These are a great talent committed to our care, for the use or abuse of which we must be answerable. That Christians do not agree about their meaning, arises from no obscurity in the words of Christ, but really from a preference for their own traditions. They are more anxious to uphold the infallibility of their church than to learn the gospel from the lips of Jesus. Consequently they contrive to twist his words into a forced accordance with their own sentiments. But in doing so, they only re-enact the crime which Jesus censured in the Jews, who, in a similar way, set aside the divine commandments. If these were guilty, such conduct in Christians is even more culpable, inasmuch as they have been forewarned of it. When the plea of ignorance is removed, that which was at one time an *error* is transformed into a *crime*. And so says Jesus in reference to the Jews: "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." And so, we may be persuaded, will he say of Christians also; if they do not, laying aside their prejudices, form at once their faith and conduct agreeably to the plain rule of doctrine and duty laid down for our guidance in the words of him who only is "the way, the truth, and the life."

B. C. D.

THE WIFE OF THE INTEMPERATE.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

JANE Harwood, with her husband and children, made one among the many families who removed to the unplanted Western wild. The change from the manner of life in which she had been brought up in her native New England, was great. But she never complained, and busied herself with those duties which befit the wife of a lonely emigrant.

One of her principal cares was an invalid boy. The charge of his health, and of his mind, occupied her most anxious thoughts. She supplicated that the pencil which

was to write upon his soul, and which seemed to be placed in her hand, might be guided from above. She spoke to him in the tenderest manner of his Father in Heaven, and of His will respecting little children.

Jane Harwood had a different, and a still deeper trial, in the intemperance of her husband. In his fits of intoxication, there was no form of persecution which distressed her so much as unkindness to the feeble and suffering boy. On such occasions, it was in vain that she attempted to protect him. She might neither shelter him in her bosom, nor control the frantic violence of the father.

The timid boy, in terror of his natural protector, withered like a crushed flower. It was of no avail that neighbours remonstrated with the unfeeling parent, or that hoary-headed men warned him solemnly of his sins. Intemperance had destroyed his respect for man, and his fear of God.

The wasted and wild-eyed invalid shrank from the glance and footstep of his father, as from the approach of a foe. Harshness, and the agitation of fear, deepened a disease that might else have yielded. Returning spring brought no gladness to the declining child. Consumption laid his hand upon his vitals, and his nights were restless and full of pain.

"Mother, I wish I could once more smell the violets that grew upon the green bank, by our old, dear home."
"It is too early for violets, my child; but the grass is growing bright and beautiful around us, and the birds sing sweetly, as if their little hearts were full of praise."
The mother knew that his hectic fever had been recently increasing, and saw that there was a strange brightness in his eye.

Seating herself on his low bed, she bowed her face to his to soothe and compose him. "Mother, do you think my father will come?" Dreading the alarm which, in his paroxysms of coughing, he evinced at his father's approach, she answered, "I think not, love, you had better try to sleep."

"Mother, I wish he would come. I am not afraid now. Perhaps he would let me lay my cheek to his, once more, as he used to do, when I was a babe in my grandmother's arms. I should be glad to say a kind good bye to him, before I go to heaven."

Gazing earnestly in his face, she saw the work of the destroyer. "My son! my dear son! say, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'"—"Mother," he replied, with a smile upon his ghastly features, "he is ready for me. I am willing to go with him. Hold the baby to me, that I may kiss her once more. That is all. Now sing to me; and oh! wrap me closer in your arms, for I shiver with cold!"

He clung, with the death-grasp, to that bosom which had long been his sole earthly refuge. "Sing louder, a little louder, dearest mother, I cannot hear you." Tremulous tones, like those of a broken harp, rose above her grief, to comfort the dying child. One sigh of icy breath was upon her cheek, as she joined it to his, one shudder, and all was over.

She stretched the body on the bed, and, kneeling beside it, hid her face in that grief which none but mothers feel. It was a deep and sacred solitude—alone with the dead. Only the soft breathings of the sleeping babe were heard. Then the silence was broken by a piercing voice of supplication for strength to endure. The petition, which began in weakness, closed in faith. It became a prayer of thanksgiving to him who had released the dove-like spirit from its prison-house of pain, to share the bliss of angels.

She arose from her knees, and bent calmly over the dead. The placid features of her first-born wore an angelic smile; she smoothed the shining locks around the pure forehead, and gazed long on what was to her so beautiful. Amid her tears was an expression, chastened and sublime, as of one who gave a cherub back to his Creator.

The father entered carelessly. She pointed to the pale, immovable brow. "See—he no longer suffers." He drew near, and looked with surprise on the dead. A few natural tears forced their way, and fell upon the face of the first-born, who was once his pride. He even spoke tenderly to the emaciated mother, and she who, a few moments before, felt raised above the sway of grief, wept like an infant, as those few affectionate tones touched the sealed fountains of other years.

James Harwood returned from the funeral of the child in much mental distress. His misdeeds were brought to remembrance, and reflection was misery. Sleep was dis-

turbed by visions of his neglected boy. In broken dreams, he fancied that he heard him coughing from his low bed, as he was wont to do. With a strange disposition of kindness, he felt constrained to go to him, but his limbs refused their office. Then a little, thin, dead hand would be thrust from the dark grave and beckon him to follow to the unseen world.

While conscience thus haunted him with terrors, many prayers arose from pitying and pious hearts, that he might now be led to repentance. There was, indeed, a change in his habits, and she, who was above all others interested in his reformation, spared no effort to win him back to the path of virtue, and to soothe his accusing spirit into peace with itself, and obedience to its dictator.

Yet was she doomed to witness the full force of the conflict of grief and remorse against intemperance; only to see them suddenly overthrown. The reviving goodness, with whose promise she had so solaced herself, as even to give thanks that her beloved son had not died in vain, was transient as the morning dew. Habits of industry, which seemed to have been springing up, proved themselves to be without root.

The dead, and his cruelty to the dead, were alike forgotten. Disaffection to that tender and trusting wife; who, "against hope had believed in hope," resumed its habitual sway. The friends who had alternately reproved and encouraged him, felt that their efforts were of no avail. Intemperance, like the "strong man armed," took final possession of a soul that lifted no prayer for aid, and ceased to stir itself up to struggle with the destroyer.

To lay waste the comfort of his wife seemed now the principal object of this miserable man. Day after day did she witness for herself and for her household, the fearful changes of his causeless anger and brutal tyranny. She felt the utter necessity of deriving consolation, and the power of endurance, wholly from above.

She was faithful in the discharge of the difficult duties that devolved upon her, and especially careful not to irritate him by reproaches or a gloomy countenance. Yet she could not sometimes prevent from rising mournfully to her view, her sweet native village—the peaceful home and fond friends of her childhood so far away—and the constant endearing attentions, which won her early love

for one whose ill-treatment now strewed his path with thorns.

In this new and solitary settlement, she had no relative to protect her from his insolence; she felt that she was entirely in his power—that it was a power without generosity, and that there is no tyranny so entire and terrible, as that of an alienated and intemperate husband.

Still looking to Heaven, she found her courage revive, and deepen into a child-like confidence. After putting her children to bed, she sat alone, evening after evening, while the joys of early days, and the sorrows of maturity, passed in review before her.

The absences of her husband grew more frequent and protracted. Once, during the third night of his departure, she knew not where, she lay sleepless, listening for his footsteps. Sometimes she fancied she heard his shouts of wild laughter, but it was only the shriek of the tempest; then she thought the sounds of his frenzied anger rang in her ears. It was the roar of the hoarse wind through the forest.

All night long she listened to these tumults, and hushed and sang to her affrighted babe. Early in the morning, her eyes were attracted by a group coming up slowly from the river which ran near her dwelling. A terrible foreboding came upon her. She thought they bore a corpse. It was, indeed, the corpse of her husband. He had been drowned, as it was supposed, during the darkness of the preceding night, while attempting to cross a bridge of logs, which had been broken by the swollen waters.

Utter prostration of spirit came over the desolate mourner. Her energies were broken, and her heart withered. She had sustained the hardships of emigration and the privations of poverty—the burdens of unceasing toil and unrequited care, without murmuring. She had laid her first-born in the grave with resignation; she had seen him in whom her heart's young affections were garnered up, become a prey to vice the most disgusting and destructive. Yet she had borne up under all. One hope had lingered with her as an "anchor of the soul," the hope that he might yet repent and be reclaimed. But now, he had died in his sin. The deadly leprosy which had stolen over his heart could no more be "purged with sacrifice or offering, for ever."

She knew not that a single prayer for mercy had preceded the soul on its passage to the judge's bar. There were bitter dregs in this cup of woe which she had never before tasted. With heaviness of an unspoken and peculiar nature, was the victim of intemperance borne from the house that he had troubled, and buried by the side of his son, to whose tender years he had been an unnatural enemy. And among those who surrounded his open grave, there was sorrow, bearing the features of that fearful "sorrow which is without hope."

SLAVERY AND ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION.

(Extracted from Dr. Dewey's Lecture on American Morals and Manners, delivered January 10, before the New York Lyceum.)

THE wrong and hardship of the servile condition is sufficiently manifest, and it is not to be a matter of surprise that it awakens strong sympathy and indignant remonstrance. In all this I sympathize with the Anti-Slavery movement. That a MAN should be property; that when one reckons up what he is worth, he should say, 80 human beings, 50,000 dollars; that a human being should be passed from hand to hand by a bill of sale, like an ox or a horse; that all his thoughts, feelings, hopes, desires, should be accounted of no more than as the ink that writes his dark fate in that mournful and unjust contract: this must shock every natural and humane feeling. He is not a man that can buy a man without emotion. The thing is intolerable, and it cannot and will not be long endured. Those who think that human slavery is to be perpetual, know nothing of the age that is rising upon us. Let them make the bond as strong as they will, the pure fire that is kindling in the breasts of surrounding millions, will melt the seal from that bond. It is the fire, not of fanaticism, but of Christianity, and it will dissolve the chains of every earthly thralldom. It is to bring deliverance, not from slavery alone, but from every wrong or evil. Nor, considered as a physical condition, is slavery the worst of evils. The condition of the wretched and outcast poor in all the principal cities of Christendom is worse than slavery. The slave has no fear of the famine

that is frequently threatening the poor of England and Ireland. He sees around him no famishing children. Food to eat, raiment to wear, a house to live in, provision for his old age, medicine and attendance for his sick, all this is secured to him by the very conditions of his servitude. We are not saying that servitude is a slight evil, but we wish to look at it fairly and all round. The slave is not the victim of terrible sufferings; that is not the evil of his condition. He is not ordinarily scourged, or starved, or maltreated in any way; his master's interest forbids it. He is the gayest of all toilers. In the lowest castes of poverty and toil in other communities, there is nothing like his cheerfulness and contentment. Bad signs these may be in some views, but they are not signs of suffering. He is exposed, no doubt, to be treated with severity, and is so at times; but servitude in this country is not a mass of toils, troubles, and woes, with the driver's lash and the victim's shriek resounding through it, to which the sympathies of all the world must fly, demanding instant deliverance. No, it is a moral condition, a great, serious, unhappy, unjust moral condition, from which relief is to be gained, as it always has been through all ages, by slower processes. Nor is the relation between the master and the slave an essential, instant, invariable transgression of moral law, pronounced to be such at once, for ever by conscience—like lying, stealing, crime: It is not a *malum per se*, but a *malum prohibitum*; prohibited, in fact, in the long run, by expediency; prohibited by our general moral sentiments. But it is not a relation which either party to it is bound in conscience, under all possible circumstances, to break instantly. It does not follow that, because it originated in wrong, it is wrong to delay relief from it. If a feudal lord had left to me, his heir, a dozen miserable victims—with their eyes put out—groaning in the dungeons of a castle surrounded by precipices,—it would not be my duty, great as the wrong was which had been done them, to turn them out to precipitate themselves from the rocks, or to perish in the desert. Neither is the original purchase of slaves to be represented as a traffic in souls, a buying, for five hundred dollars, of the godlike faculty in man, the spark divine and immortal. Such things cannot be bought or sold, any more than the free air, or the

far-penetrating light of the sun. It is a buying of the new of human muscles and sinews. The command over them is too absolute, and it is for life; that is all wrong. But the same thing is done for a term of time, in every indenture, in every disposal of a son's services during his non-age. A master-workman, a manufacturer, *buys* those services. Is it intrinsically wrong, then, for me to buy the services of a coloured man in Georgia, supposing it were my intention to benefit him, to educate him, to prepare him for freedom, and eventually to give him freedom? I cannot go into details here. All I mean to say is, that the relation is not an intrinsic and instant wrong, forbidden to be continued for a moment, under any circumstances. It is a wrong to be remedied, and to be remedied as fast as possible. Let the eye of the world be fixed upon it. Let wise men consider and discuss it. Let the opinion of all mankind be fully expressed upon it. I do not object to that sort of foreign interference. Let the tide of moral influence rise till it sweeps all servitude from the face of the earth. This is the only legitimate and useful influence that can be brought to bear upon it.

I think it must be apparent to any candid and reflecting mind, that this is a subject surrounded with difficulties. We are accused abroad of a base and criminal apathy upon it. The charge is utterly and cruelly false. From my youth up I have known the truth to be far otherwise. Often and often have I known this matter to be discussed at the North with solemn deliberation—at the South with anxieties and tears even, which would have won a consideration far different from this coarse and ferocious abuse. Why, the situation of the Southern planter, good Sirs, is not such an enviable one—full of anxieties to be, full of cares often, tending upon the sick, providing for the improvident, bearing with the imbecile. And this is a situation entailed upon him. He did not choose it, and he wishes he were rid of it, would your wisdom but tell him what he is to do! Emancipate, you say. But he tells you that the man who is emancipated is the worse, and the worse off for it. What, then, is he to do? He were an angel from heaven that should bring the right message; but he certainly would not come in the guise of Mr. O'Connell or Mr. Dickens. It has been proclaimed

abroad that our pulpit dare not speak out on this subject; that many of our clergy are Abolitionists, and have not the courage to confess it. I repel the charge with indignation. Our clergy generally are not Abolitionists. Nay, and we have discussed the subject of slavery less frequently than we otherwise might; because we saw that the discussion was taking a dangerous turn. Foreigners can strike in freely among us; the blow does not hurt them; they care not for our discussions and our perils; but we, with their leave, must look a little more carefully after these matters. It is always found that one's neighbours can speak much more freely of his family than he can himself. They understand but little of the difficulty and delicacy of his situation. I say plainly that I do not like the tone of English criticism upon our affairs. I have seen more than one rough and reckless comment upon our soberest writers on politics, like Channing and Strong. They are considered as timid and time-serving. People abroad look with a sort of abstract and curious feeling upon our discussions. They like to see the democratic principle, as they consider it, carried out to its fullest length, as it is in the former writings of Brownson and of others, young and rash as he was. That pleases them, amuses them. But we have something else to do in this country besides pleasing or amusing anybody. We must be sober, if we would be wise men. We have many things to consider that are out of the reach of Transatlantic eyes. We have many interests to take into the account, many powers and tendencies to hold in a careful balance. God forbid that we should set anything above the sovereign, solemn, eternal Truth! But beneath that truth we must walk reverently, soberly, humbly.

THE NORTHERN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

THAT this Institution has been productive of many advantages, the schools in its connexion are well aware. They have enjoyed them. The friends of Sunday Schools in our body have received from the Association great facilities, and considerable aid in their benevolent labours. Let it sink, and the inevitable consequence will

be, the ruin of our poorer schools. Even the strongest and most flourishing, in its connexion, would be materially injured. The requisites which the Association provides, could not be obtained by any of our schools through any other channel without the greatest difficulty, and, I may safely add, double the present cost. Of the utility, then, of the Association, no one can doubt. And that its friends are perfectly convinced of its importance, we have the strongest testimony in the liberal manner in which they have responded to its latest call for pecuniary aid. The large contributions to its funds, as acknowledged on the cover of the *Bible Christian*, prove that its exertions are duly appreciated,—a circumstance, whose chief effect should be to encourage its managers to increase their exertions for its increased usefulness.

But how may the sphere of its operations be most advantageously extended? We are pledged to our friends to publish forthwith a Commentary on the Gospels, for the use of Sunday Schools and families—this pledge we are bound to redeem—and the doing so will more than exhaust our funds: our means will not warrant us, neither will our engagements to our friends permit us, to take any additional steps whereby expense might be incurred: how, we ask, under these circumstances, could the Association further extend its usefulness?

These questions I propose, not so much with the design of affording myself an opportunity of making the following remarks, as for the purpose of directing the attention of the friends of Sunday-school instruction to the subject, and the hope that some of them may be induced to offer suggestions to the Committee of management. From my own knowledge of several of those gentlemen, I am certain that they would gratefully receive any hints that might be communicated to them; and, therefore, these observations.

It has occurred to me, that to keep alive a warm interest in the Association, its public meetings are not sufficiently frequent. The chief—I might say, the sole—object of the Institution is, to promote the religious education of the young. It cannot afford to publish, and circulate gratuitously, a series of tracts, enforcing this its great object, and offering suggestions as to the best means of accomplishing it: but it can, without almost any ex-

pense, hold public meetings, at which these topics could be discussed before those who were engaged or interested in the religious instruction of the young. I grant, that to have these meetings always in Belfast, would not serve the purpose contemplated. The benefits thus conveyed, would not be directly felt beyond the town, for teachers of schools at any distance would not (judging from the past) be present; to strengthen each other's hands in the good work, and to carry away with them that increased zeal and strengthened determination to persevere in their labours of love, which their mutual general consultations could alone produce. Parents of humbler rank could not possibly be present from distant congregations to profit by the observations of those whose better opportunities, more extensive information, and greater experience, enable to offer valuable suggestions. Let no one imagine that I mean to question the competency of the pulpit for the purpose, or to insinuate that the ministry does not faithfully discharge its duties in this respect. I make these statements from the conviction, that many parents who seldom enter the house of prayer, would attend meetings of an Association, if occasionally held in their neighbourhood; and that, also, even the most regular attenders at public worship would be benefited by such meetings, even though the addresses there delivered were far less eloquent and impressive than the discourses which they are privileged to hear on each returning Sabbath. On such occasions, I believe that the simplest, plainest, most unadorned addresses, would be the most suitable and useful. I fear that I have gone too much into detail; but, in proceeding, I shall study to be as brief as possible. My suggestion, for the consideration of the friends of the Association, is this:— That its public meetings be held QUARTERLY, — the annual general meeting to take place as formerly in Belfast, in the month of May, when the Report of the past year should be read—officers elected, &c. &c.; and that meetings be also held in August, November, and February, with some of the schools in our connexion.

This arrangement would not incur *any* expense to the Association. I am certain that there is not a school connected with it that would not cheerfully afford accommodation, and be gratified by the presence of their friends.

It is complained, and justly too, that there is scarcely

a school represented by a layman at the annual general meeting. Let the plan I have suggested be adopted, and I have not the shadow of a doubt that the schools visited by the Association would allow a single meeting to take place in Belfast without having representatives present.

Permit me, in concluding these already too lengthened observations, to make another suggestion. To recommend its adoption it has merely its utility. To carry it into operation would require funds. A trifle, however, would enable the Committee to make an experiment as to its advantages. I propose, then, for the consideration of the Managing Committee, and the friends generally of the Association, the propriety of offering, at least, for one year, as an experiment, a number of volumes of works connected with religious education, to be placed in a library of the school, the attendance of whose teachers and children had been most regular for the preceding twelve months, and whose business had been conducted in the most methodical manner. The superintendent's book, signed by himself and the minister, to be submitted to the Committee at Belfast, and the prize to be awarded by them to the school which they may deem most deserving of it. And that they also offer a small prize to the writer of the best essay on the duties, &c. of a Sunday-school teacher—the work not to exceed 12 pages 12mo. A little manual of that sort is, I think, very much required, and would be of immense service to many of our teachers, and, to some extent, to parents also.

I have a few other remarks to make on this subject; but the length of this article reminds me that I must reserve them for some other occasion.

X. Y. Z.

February 15, 1844.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

MOSES.—No. VI.

(Concluded from Volume V. page 311.)

There's not a palace—not a dome—not one poor humble shed
Where anguish hath not been; and hope dispelled by mortal dread!
For death is at the marriage feast—death's in the festive hall;
The eldest born of man and beast obey his awful call.

In every house the blighted branch falls by the parent tree;
 And who may this destroyer chide, or ask, "What doth he?"
 —One to his neighbour sends for aid, his heartfelt grief to share;
 "Come—for my first-born son is dead."—"And mine—he lieth
 there:

In death he writhes in mortal pain—upon the gods he calls;
 How can I prop thy falling house—behold, my own house falls!
 How can I dry thy weeping eye, a consolation send?
 Here must be wail and agony when friend saluteth friend.
 —Where the magicians? Sorcerers where? Can these no aid
 impart?

Vain all their false pretence at power to heal a broken heart.
 Ye haughty priests in proud array put all your trappings on,
 Pray that your deities restore my own—my firstborn son.
 Bid life flow back through every vein—recall the parted breath.
 Let offerings, incantations slay the cruel murderer—death."

Oh, 'twas a bitter grief that night when every heart forlorn,
 Each in his soul's mute agony gazed on his eldest born.
 Some mocked the power that sent the woe, and laughed with
 demon grin;

And some, remembering Israel's God, exclaimed, "'Tis for our
 sin—

More coals he heaps upon his wrath, and hotter grows his ire,
 What if the coming morn reveal a yet more fearful fire!"

—Forth rushed the maddened multitude unto the palace walls,
 But found that death had revered not the monarch's gorgeous
 halls!

The heart obdurate he hath touched, the terror-stricken king
 Cries—"I will let the people go, their leaders quickly bring.
 Up—up—arise—go forth in haste; and let not one delay,
 And take your wives and little ones, and cattle on your way;
 AND BLESS ME ALSO ERE WE PART"—the wretched Pharaoh
 cries!

And is this he who erst so bold Jehovah could despise?
 Kuowest thou now the Lord of life, or speakest thou from thy
 fears?

Here is no sorrow for thy sin—no penitential tears.
 No heart renewed a blessing asks—A selfish terror now,
 Has sent the proud word from thy lips, the scorn from off thy
 brow.

And shall the prophet of the Lord to thee a blessing deign?
Presumptuous man!—Thou dost not know what heavenly blessings mean.

The ancient patriarch blessed the king* that sat on Egypt's throne,

That king had hardened not his heart, nor impious works had done.

But in the servant of the Lord, the God of truth he praised;
And proved he revered holy men, and such to honours raised.

No holy change is in thine heart, thy soul will never bend,
To wisdom's calm and meek control—but sin on to the end.
Ere thou hast time to have removed the corpses from thy sight,—

Thy people to recover the deep horrors of the night—
Destruction as a whirlwind comes—vain every wicked boast,
When back the awful waves shall roll on thee and on thine host!

When the dry path for Israel made through the divided wave,
Thou dared to think a path for thee—but God alone can save,
And thou art past his mercy now—his law he must fulfil,
And death and anguish wait on him who worshipped his own will.

No path amid the foaming sea for penitence appears,
Here hardened hearts may read their fate for never-ending years.

M. B.

REVIEW.

Religious Union, with Intellectual Freedom: a Letter, addressed to the Congregation worshipping in the Unitarian Chapel, Union-street, Glasgow. By JOHN TAYLOR. London: Green. 1844. Pp. 37, 12mo.

It is our painful duty to notice this pamphlet. Various considerations would have rendered it very pleasing to our minds to have passed it over in silence; but where the interests of vitally important truth are concerned, we would be inexcusable in withholding the expression of our sentiments.

* See Genesis xiv. 10.

The name of Mr. Taylor is well known to many of our readers. He was educated for the ministry among the Calvinistic Dissenters in England, and was chosen minister of an Independent congregation in Leicester. In the course of a few months, he adopted Unitarian opinions, resigned his pastoral charge, and was soon after chosen minister of the Unitarian congregation at Kidderminster, whence he removed to Glasgow on Mr. Harris's acceptance of a call from the Edinburgh congregation. Mr. Taylor is a gentleman of refined and cultivated mind; and the brief notice we have given of his history sufficiently attests his integrity and purity of motive: while we express, in the strongest terms, our dissent from the doctrines put forth in the pamphlet before us, we cast no imputation on his personal character.

The author states that he has been recently led to reject the authenticity of those parts of the New Testament which narrate *miraculous* events, together with all belief in the miracles themselves, and especially in the resurrection of the Saviour. Christianity itself, he does not regard as a Divine Revelation. In short, he is what is commonly called an *Anti-supernaturalist*; and his object in publishing the present letter is to declare these sentiments to his congregation; and to persuade them that they will best consult their own spiritual improvement, the progress of religious truth, and the freedom of the human mind, by retaining him as their pastor. It is evident that no congregation could continue a minister entertaining the opinions expressed by Mr. Taylor, without, at the same time, discarding Christianity as its recognised bond of union; and we are not therefore surprised, that at a meeting of the members of the Glasgow church, lately held, Mr. Taylor was respectfully called on to resign the situation of pastor, as they could no longer appreciate his services; he having denied the fundamental principles and doctrines of Christianity.

Mr. Taylor evidently supposes that all who are opposed to the continuance of persons holding his opinions in the ministry of Christian churches, are opposed to free inquiry, and do not understand the fundamental principles of Protestantism; but while we are advocates for the right of private judgment, and hold that no man should be subjected to suffering or annoyance for his

opinions, whatever they may be, we must at the same time contend that those who are opposed to the whole system of Christianity are not suitable ministers to the churches of Christ. There is a broad and well-defined line of demarcation between faith and unbelief: and we cannot see that the interests of truth, of holiness, or of liberty, can be promoted, by confounding things so opposite in their nature, or by representing the difference between them as trivial and evanescent.

As Mr. Taylor preached the anniversary sermons at the last meeting of the Belfast Unitarian Society, it is only justice to the Committee of that Society to state, that they had at that time no suspicion of the change that has recently taken place in his views.

We are persuaded that Mr. Taylor's opinions have not found acceptance to any considerable extent, and we trust that recent events, painful as they have been, and immediately injurious, will result in purifying and strengthening a church, which more than any other has been a bulwark against the encroachments of Infidelity.

Sunday-school Rhymes, and other Metrical pieces. By a Teacher.
H. Greer, Belfast. 1844. Pp. 128, 32mo.

We welcome this little volume, not only as an expression of the author's interest in the Sunday School, and the cause of religion; but also as an important aid to those, whether Sunday-school teachers, or not, who desire to cultivate the spirit of piety. It is "inscribed, in affectionate remembrance of participation, both in pleasures and solicitudes, to the Teachers of the Sunday School of the church at Holywood, in connexion with the presbytery of Antrim." A small number of the Hymns, particularly suited for the Sunday School, have been stitched up separately and are sold at a low price, so that they may be generally circulated. But the whole volume, treating on a variety of subjects, abounds in so beautiful and Christian sentiments, often clothed in the happiest language, that we trust it will be widely read.

INTELLIGENCE.

PROCEEDINGS AGAINST UNITARIAN PROPERTY IN IRELAND.—EUSTACE-STREET MEETING-HOUSE AND FUNDS.

[We extract, from the *Inquirer* newspaper, the following interesting report of the important case of the Eustace-street Presbyterian Congregation, Dublin, on the general accuracy of which our readers may rely, as it has been carefully prepared by a gentleman intimately acquainted with all the facts and details.]

The information in this case was filed by the Attorney-General, at the relation of George Mathews and others, against the Rev. Joseph Hutton and others, being respectively the minister, trustees and members of Eustace-street Congregation, in the city of Dublin, and prayed that the charity should be established according to the intent of the parties founding the same, *as expressed* in the several foundation-deeds, and that all the defendants should be removed from the various congregational trusts, on the ground of their being of that class of Christians commonly called Unitarians; and that it might be declared that ministers or preachers of Unitarian doctrine, and members of their congregations, or persons holding Unitarian belief and doctrine, are not entitled to continue in possession of Eustace-street meeting-house, and the other congregational charities connected therewith, and that the present ministers and trustees should be removed, and that it should be declared that such Presbyterian Protestant Dissenters alone as believe in the doctrines of the Trinity, and the Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, can be considered as coming within the intent and meaning of the original founders of the meeting-house, and other charitable property, and as entitled to possess it, and participate in its benefits.

On Monday, Feb. 19, Mr. Sergeant Warren opened the case of the relators, who, it appears, are not members of the congregation, nor in any way connected therewith, being described in the information as members of the Presbyterian Congregation of Fermoy, in the county of Cork. It appeared also that the congregation of Eustace-street has always been unanimous in the choice of its ministers, and the administration of the congregational property; that they are perfectly satisfied with the conduct of the present ministers and trustees (one of the said ministers, the defendant Mr. Hutton; having been fifty-seven years their pastor); and that no complaint has ever been made by any member of the congregation, as to the opinions preached by the ministers, or the mode in which the property has been administered by the trustees.

On the part of the relators it was stated, that on the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1665, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Winter, and the Rev. Samuel Mather, were ejected from their parochial cures in the city of Dublin, as *nonconformists*, and formed such of their parishioners as adhered to them into a congregation, who built a meeting-house at New Row, in the city of Dublin. That in due

course of ministerial succession a number of pastors officiated in New Row, up to the year 1718, when Nathaniel Weld and John Leland officiated as colleagues. That in this latter year Joseph Damer, by deed, vested £1,700 in four trustees, including the said Nathaniel Weld, upon trust as to £200, to lay out the same in "*building a new meeting-house for the Protestant Dissenting Congregation of New Row, for the service and worship of God in that way, for such estate or term as should be purchased in the ground whereon such meeting-house should be built;*" and as to the remaining £1,500, to lay out the same in the purchase of lands and tenements upon trust, to pay out of the annual profits thereof £20 per annum to teach poor boys in the city of Dublin, reading, writing, and arithmetic; £20 per annum to the support of the said Nathaniel Weld and John Leland, ministers of said congregation, in equal shares, so long as they should continue pastors thereof, and to such teachers and preachers, from time to time, during the continuance of such estate so to be purchased as aforesaid, as should be teachers and preachers of said congregation; and to apply the residue of the profits of said lands to binding out the aforesaid poor boys to useful trades, or to the support of poor widows inhabiting said city of Dublin, or to such other pious uses as the said trustees and their successors, or a majority of them, should think fit and appoint. It was then stated, that a meeting-house had accordingly been built in Eustace-street, to which the said congregation removed in 1729, and where they have ever since continued to worship.

On Tuesday the 20th instant, Sergeant Warren continued his statement, to the effect, that all the congregational donations, bequests, and charities, created subsequently to the above-mentioned deed of 1718, should be considered as accretions, and be devoted to the propagation of the doctrines of the Trinity, and the Supreme Deity of Christ, even though it should be proved that *all or any* of said subsequent charities had been granted by Unitarian donors and founders, and after the congregation had become Unitarians.

The Chancellor said the proposition was a strong one, and asked Mr. Warren for his authority; and the learned counsel relied on the judgment of Lord Cottenham, in the case of "*The Attorney-General against Pearson,*" from which it appeared, that a gentleman, a Unitarian, had given £100 to the support of the ministers of Wolverhampton Chapel, after the congregation had become Unitarians, and that Lord Cottenham had, nevertheless, decreed, that the said donation must follow the fate of the original Trinitarian endowment, and had not in his decree severed the said Unitarian donation from the original charity. The learned counsel, however, admitted that when the same case was before Lord Eldon, his Lordship had ordered an account to be taken before the Master, distinguishing how much had been contributed by Trinitarians, and how much by Unitarians, but stated that Lord Eldon's order had never been carried into effect.

Mr. R. Wright then read the relator's proofs, to establish the

Trinitarian sentiments of all the ministers of New Row, including Nathaniel Weld and John Leland, the first ministers of Eustace-street, and during whose pastorship, as already stated, the congregation removed to Eustace-street in 1729.

The Solicitor-General then stated the case of the defendants.— He said that the congregation of Eustace-street had always belonged to the non-subscribing Protestant Dissenters, whose distinguishing principles, as opposed to the Synod of Ulster and the Scotch Church, have ever been the rejection of human creeds, articles and confessions of faith; the unfettered exercise of private judgment and free inquiry in matters of religion; and the adoption of the Bible alone as their congregational standard of faith and practice. That these principles involved the right of the congregation to change its opinions on all controverted points of doctrine within the pale of the Bible, and that the founders of Eustace-street Meeting-house having belonged to the same class of Protestant Dissenters, and anxious to secure to their descendants the same liberty of conscience which they claimed and exercised for themselves, had purposely made the words in the foundation-deeds as general and as free from doctrinal restrictions as possible. The learned counsel then read the deed of 1718, and detailed the various subsequent funds and bequests. The principal of these are Lowton's fund, instituted in 1741, by the will of John Lowton, a member of the congregation of Eustace-street, for the support of the ministers and boys' charity school. The almshouse fund, instituted in 1744, by the will of Ralph Cord, also a member of the congregation, for the support of "*such poor widows in the city of Dublin as the officers of the congregation of Eustace-street for the time being should deem fit.*" This fund was subsequently increased by the donations and bequests of several members of the congregation in the years, 1765, 1785, 1819, and 1825, the *three latter periods* being admittedly Unitarian. The learned solicitor then detailed several donations and bequests for the support of the ministers of Eustace-street, made in the years of 1768, 1785, 1819, and 1825, by different members of the congregation, and all under the ministry of Mr. Thomas and Mr. Taylor, who were admittedly Unitarian ministers. In 1786, the congregation purchased an annuity for the widows of deceased pastors from the then trustees of the deed of 1718, for the sum of £300, which had been raised, by congregational subscriptions, for the widow of the Rev. Samuel Thomas, an admittedly Unitarian minister. In 1780, Mrs. Singleton bequeathed certain lands to trustees, to apply the profits in the formation of a girls' school in connection with Eustace-street congregation, and in 1792 a congregational subscription was entered into in aid of Mrs. Singleton's bequest, and the girls' school was opened in the same year, and has ever since been continued. In 1836, under the ministry of the defendant, Mr. Hutton, the present widows fund, for the widows of deceased pastors of Eustace-street congregation, was instituted, and in 1832, the marriage portion fund in aid of the said girls' school was founded. It was stated that Dr. Leland

died in 1766, and was succeeded by Mr. Thomas in 1767, who was admitted to have been a Unitarian, and who died in 1786, when he was succeeded by the defendant, Mr. Hutton, as to whose Unitarian sentiments there was no dispute. Thus, there was a period of 77 years in the history of the Eustace-street congregation, during which its pastors were admitted on all sides to have held Unitarian opinions. The learned Solicitor then contended that there was no ambiguity in the foundation-deed of 1718 to warrant the admission of extrinsic evidence in its construction. The words in that deed specifically pointed out a particular Protestant Dissenting congregation by name, as the object of the founder's bounty. The defendant and the present congregation were the regular successors according to the congregational usage of 126 years, of those whom the founder had endowed, and the present congregation is now what it was then, and what it is described in the deed to be, namely, a Protestant Dissenting congregation. It has never assumed a different denomination from what it is described to be in the foundation-deed. The learned Solicitor concluded by saying that even if the Chancellor should decree against the present ministers and trustees with respect to the meeting-house, yet in point of law, and on the broadest principles of justice and honesty, the defendants were entitled to whatever funds had been created at the several periods of time when the respective donors and ministers were confessedly Unitarians.

On Wednesday, the 21st instant, Mr. John Armstrong commenced to read the defendant's proofs, which were concluded next day at a quarter to three o'clock. It appeared incontestibly from the evidence, that the founders of Eustace-street meeting-house belonged to the non-subscribing Protestant Dissenters; that Nathaniel Weld and John Leland, under whose ministry the meeting-house was built, publicly declared they would have refused toleration on the condition of "*subscribing the Westminster Confession of Faith, or the doctrinal articles of the Church of England.*" That the said Weld and Leland publicly branded such subscription as "*a clog*" upon their religious liberty, and accounted themselves happy, that while their dissenting brethren in England were subject to such subscription, the Dissenters in Ireland had obtained a toleration without it. That the said Weld and Leland claimed a right of thinking differently "*from those who had gone before them, in controverted points of doctrine,*" and that accordingly, in 1725, they both attacked the Westminster Confession of Faith, "*as containing doctrines which obscure the true light of the gospel, and one which, in terminis, contradicts it.*" That Leland, whatever his early opinions may have been, became (as the Chancellor admitted) an Arian before his death. That the Rev. Philip Taylor, at his ordination in 1770, at Kaye-street congregation, Liverpool (now worshipping in Paradise-street), expressly claimed and reserved to himself "*the right to change his opinions in matters of religion, should he see fit in reason and conscience.*" That the said Philip Taylor's manuscript sermons, marked by him as having been

preached in Eustace-street meeting-house, during the period of more than half-a-century, inculcated the same great principles of the non-subscribing Protestant Dissenters in the strongest and most unequivocal manner. That the charge publicly delivered by the late Dr. Moody, at the ordination of defendant, Mr. Hutton, in Eustace-street, in 1788, expressly inculcated the same great and distinguishing principles; and that the Southern Dublin Presbytery, to which the Eustace-street congregation belonged from its formation up to the year 1809, and the Synod of Munster, to which body it has belonged from 1809 to the present moment, have always maintained and exercised the same great principles of private judgment in matters of religion, and the rejection of all creeds, articles, and confessions of faith, except the Holy Scriptures of God. In support of this evidence were read the depositions, *on oath*, of the Rev. John Scott Porter, the clerk of the Presbytery of Antrim; the Rev. Wm. Bruce, moderator of that reverend body; the Rev. Wm. Hunter, clerk of the Synod of Munster; and the Rev. Thomas Dix Hincks, who entered the Presbytery of Munster, as a minister of that body, in 1790, and who was present at many of their ordinations during the thirty years he remained in their connection. The strength of the parole testimony on this point may be appreciated by the following extract from Mr. Hunter's testimony:—
 "The distinguishing and characteristic principles of the Synod of Munster, as a religious society, are, the taking the canonical Scriptures, and the canonical scriptures alone, as its rule of faith and practice, and rejecting all creeds drawn up by uninspired men, and recognising the right of private judgment, and such have been the characteristic principles of the body since its formation. Said Synod has never exercised or asserted the right of imposing upon any person, or body of persons, authoritative interpretations of scripture as a condition of church-membership or communion with the said Synod, and every individual and congregation in connection with said Synod is at liberty, from time to time, to adopt such interpretations of Scripture as may appear to such congregation or individual consonant to truth, without thereby incurring any forfeiture of church membership, or of any spiritual or temporal right incident thereto. The right of private judgment and liberty of conscience, which, by the fundamental principles of the Synod of Munster, is *guaranteed* to every congregation and individual in connection with said Synod, involves the right of every congregation and individual to change his or their opinions on controverted points of doctrine as often as conscience and conviction may dictate, and, notwithstanding such change, to continue in full communion with the said Synod, and in possession of all their Presbyterian and congregational rights and privileges." The testimony of Dr. Hincks proved precisely the same principles with regard to the Presbytery of Dublin, to which body, as already stated, the congregation of Eustace-street belonged up to the year 1809, and also with respect to the Presbytery of Munster, with which latter body the Presbytery of Dublin united in 1809 to form the body of non-

subscribing Protestant Dissenters now known as the "Southern Association or Synod of Munster." In proof that the same principles have always been maintained by the congregation of Eustace-street as well as by the ecclesiastical body to which it belongs, the depositions of some of its oldest members were read. One of these persons is upwards of ninety years of age. In proof of the same facts was read the will of Miss Anne Crosthwaite, who was the pupil and relative of Dr. Leland, and died in 1825, at the advanced age of 87. The passage in her will is as follows:—"I bequeath to the fund for the support of public worship in Eustace-street Meeting-house £100, first, because I believe it is a matter of high importance to the cause of religious truth and liberty, that *the principles on which the congregation of Eustace-street was founded* should not be suffered to decline, and that if they were strictly adhered to, many of the difficulties that are supposed to attend the study of theology would be removed, for they declare for the right of private judgment in matters of religion, maintaining that the Bible alone without note or comment is the proper rule of faith and practice for Christians. On this account Protestant Dissenters refuse their assent to articles of faith that are the dictates of fallible men."

If Miss Crosthwaite were living now, she would be one hundred and seven years of age, so that her testimony to the "*principles on which Eustace-street congregation was founded*," appears to be conclusive. This evidence was uncontradicted by a particle of proof on the part of the relators, but the Chancellor threw it overboard, because he deemed it an "*inconvenient thing*" that any denomination of Christians should possess so large a share of religious liberty as the right to change their opinions according to conscience on so vital a doctrine as the Trinity.

Mr. Armstrong then proceeded to prove, that in accordance with the right to change involved in the principle of non-subscription, the ministers and congregation of Eustace-street, at a very early period of their history, had, in point of fact, relinquished Trinitarianism, and adopted Anti-Trinitarian opinions. He proved from Emlyn's Memoirs, that Trinitarianism "*was well-nigh exploded*" amongst the Dissenters of Dublin, before the death of that celebrated divine in 1741: that Nathaniel Weld and John Leland took an active part in favour of those who refused to subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith, during the fierce debates in the Synod of Ulster, from 1721 up to the removal of the Presbytery of Antrim from that body in the year 1726; that the said Weld and Leland maintained the most friendly union with the Presbytery of Antrim after their removal from the Synod of Ulster; and that, in opposition to the Synod of Ulster, they installed Dr. Colville into the congregation of Dromore, and received him into the Presbytery of Dublin, giving him a share of their own royal bounty, and afterwards recommended him in the most affectionate terms to the care of the Presbytery of Antrim. It was then proved, from Dr. Colville's published works, that he was an Arian and violent

Anti-Calvinist, and preached against the doctrines of original sin, predestination, election and reprobation, and the imputed righteousness of Christ, all of which doctrines are held as fundamental truths of the Gospel by those who profess to believe in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

It was next proved by a variety of evidence that Mr. Rogers and Dr. Isaac Weld held Unitarian opinions. This portion of the Report, want of space obliges us to omit.

It was then proved, that John Hutchinson, the surviving original trustee of Lowton's Fund, named by Mr. Lowton himself in his will of 1741, united with Dr. Weld in signing the invitation of the congregation of Eustace-street to the Unitarian ministers, Thomas and Taylor. Passages from the works of Dr. Leland and Dr. Isaac Weld were then read in proof of their Anti-Trinitarian opinions, some of which, the Chancellor said, "*he freely admitted*, he could not reconcile with the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity."

It was then proved that Mr. Taylor, the colleague of Mr. Thomas, in addition to the facts of his having been the pupil of Dr. Priestley and Dr. John Taylor, (the latter of whom was proved to have published the strongest Unitarian works so early as 1748) expressly avowed himself a "Unitarian," in a letter addressed to the late Dr. Armstrong, and that immediately on the formation of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, Mr. Taylor became a life member by a donation of five guineas.

It was then proved by the depositions on oath of some of the oldest people in Dublin, some of them members of the congregation, and others not, that Dr. Isaac Weld, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Taylor, were all of them Unitarians, and repudiated the doctrines of the Trinity and the Supreme Deity of Christ, and that the congregation of Eustace-street during the *entire period* of the respective witnesses' acquaintance therewith, has been, and been reputed to be, a Unitarian congregation, and opposed to the said doctrines of the Trinity, and the Supreme Deity of Christ, and that Unitarian worship has always prevailed therein, and that neither three persons in one God, nor the Trinity, nor our Lord Jesus Christ, nor the Holy Ghost, nor any other being or person, but God the Father only, has been worshipped in said meeting-house, within the memory of its oldest members. For instance, Mrs. Abigail Hone deposed as follows:—"I am ninety years of age. I am a member of the Protestant Dissenting Presbyterian congregation worshipping in Eustace-street, in the city of Dublin, and have been so, I may say, for the last eighty years. I have a faint recollection of the late Dr. Leland, and a distinct recollection of Dr. Isaac Weld, the Rev. Mr. Thomas, and the Rev. Philip Taylor, having been ministers of said congregation, during the period of my membership with them, and I was very well acquainted with *all* of said ministers save the said Rev. Dr. Leland, whom I have only a recollection of having seen and heard preach to said congregation. So far as I can remember, or so far as I can speak from knowledge or hearsay, I can safely state, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as set

forth in the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession of Faith, the doctrine of the Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that he is entitled to supreme religious worship and adoration, were never taught or preached in said meeting-house of Eustace-street; and from my personal knowledge of the religious sentiments of the said Thomas, and the said Philip Taylor, with each of whom I was intimately acquainted, I know that they both repudiated said doctrines, and rejected the opinion that our Lord Jesus Christ is entitled to supreme religious worship; and it has always been reported and believed that the several ministers and members of the said congregation were decided Anti-Trinitarians, and of the opinion generally maintained by persons denominated Arians; and I can speak of my own personal knowledge, that during the entire period of my membership with said congregation, supreme religious worship has never been offered to our Lord Jesus Christ, or to the Holy Spirit, in said meeting-house, but to the Father alone—the only true God. The common principles in the profession of which the said congregation of Eustace-street are agreed as a religious body, so long as I have had any knowledge of them, from personal acquaintance with them, or from repute and hearsay, are, that supreme religious worship is due to the Father alone, through Jesus Christ his son, and our mediator, subordinate to, and derived from, the Father, and taking the Holy Scriptures alone as their rule of faith and practice, to reject all human articles, or confessions of faith.”

Mr. Armstrong concluded the defendants' proofs on Thursday the 22d inst., and Mr. Richard Moore, Q.C., spoke to evidence for the defendants in a masterly and lucid speech.

On Friday the 23d, Mr. Holmes addressed the court on the same side, and contended that it was contrary to law to go *dehors* the deed of 1718-19, as there was no ambiguity on the face of it; that the meeting-house was built for the Protestant Dissenting Congregation of New Row, which the present congregation represented, while they fully satisfied the description in the deed; that the deed having been executed *before* the passing of the Irish Toleration Act, its construction could not be affected by the exception in that act with regard to those who impugned the doctrine of the Trinity. He then argued that it never was illegal at common law to deny the Trinity, and that in Ireland it was not made illegal by any statute; that the exception in the Irish Toleration Act only left such Protestant Dissenters as denied the Trinity by “writing, preaching, or advised speaking,” liable to penalties, 16th and 17th Car. II., as *nonconformists*. The learned counsel insisted that Unitarian worship was always legal in Ireland, as the English Toleration Act, which required dissenting ministers to subscribe the doctrinal articles of the Church of England, did not extend to this country, while there was no such clause in the Irish Toleration Act of 1719. To worship God the Father, alone, therefore, which is the Essence of Unitarian worship, was never illegal in Ireland, and might have been practised, and was practised to a great extent,

without committing the *overt* act of openly attacking and assailing the doctrine of the Trinity by name. Mr. Holmes concluded his address by a most eloquent exposition of the principles of the non-subscribing Presbyterians, to which body, he said, he had the honour to belong.

Mr. Brooke, Q. C., replied, insisting that the Unitarian accretions should follow the fate of the meeting-house, which had been clearly proved to have been founded by persons who, though they were non-subscribers, yet believed in the doctrine of the Trinity.

The Chancellor then said that he would not finally dispose of this most important case till the first day of next term, and that in the mean time he would give it his best attention. He had however a strong opinion that he would give the Attorney-General a decree. He threw overboard altogether the principle of non-subscription, but admitted that Dr. Leland had adopted Arian views before his death; and that there were certain passages in the fourth volume of his sermons which his Lordship could not reconcile with the commonly-received doctrine of the Trinity. At the same time, there were other passages in the first volume of the sermons which appeared to him to inculcate the doctrine of the Trinity. At all events, he had no doubt that the parties in the foundation-deed of Eustace-street believed in the Trinity, and Supreme Deity of Christ. Though therefore he admitted that Mr. Thomas, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Hutton, were indisputably proved to have been Unitarians, and that the congregation was Unitarian during the respective ministries of these gentlemen (a period of 77 years), still he thought that the various funds and charities instituted during this period of admitted Unitarianism must follow the original endowments, and that he must decree, according to the prayer of the information, that Unitarians are not entitled to participate therein, or proper objects thereof. He would be glad to sever the Unitarian endowments if he could, but was coerced by law. He then maintained that the denial of the Trinity is an indictable offence at common law, relying on Emlyn's case as an authority, and said that the doctrine of the Athanasian Creed is an essential part of Christianity, and part and parcel of the laws of England.

Thus terminated this extraordinary case for the present. On Sunday the congregation of Eustace-street met, and unanimously resolved to appeal to the House of Lords. A subscription list towards the Appeal has been opened, and upwards of £400 already subscribed. Without the aid of our English brethren, however, it will be impossible to proceed, and we trust they will come forward liberally to aid their oppressed fellow-christians in Dublin. The names of the committee appointed to receive subscriptions are, Dr. Ledlie, Henry Hutton, Haliday Bruce, R. M. Peile, jun., George Rankin, and Joseph Hone, jun.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

On the 7th of March, the Lord Chancellor presented a Bill entitled, "An Act for the regulation of Suits relating to Meeting-

houses and other property held for religious purposes by persons dissenting from the Church of England," which was ordered to be printed. As the Bill was intended to apply to England exclusively, a petition was presented on the following evening on behalf of the Non-subscribing Presbyterians of Ireland, praying, that similar protection should be extended to them: and we are gratified to know that a Committee appointed to consider the subject, have reported, that whatever Bill it was proper to pass for the protection of meeting-houses and other property held for religious purposes by Dissenters in England, should be extended to similar cases in Ireland.

By these proceedings on the part of the legislature, some hope may be entertained, that our meeting-houses and other property will not be wrested from us by those legal persecutions of which the Eustace-street case affords us so frightfully iniquitous a sample. It is a mournful fact, however, that, if rescued from threatened spoliation, we shall not owe our escape to the justice of our Christian brethren of the General Assembly. At a late meeting, they passed a series of Resolutions sufficiently indicative of the spirit that animates their breasts. The success attendant on the attack against the General fund, and the Eustace-street property, seems to have whetted their appetite for spoil, and to urge them to overlook, not only the plainest dictates of justice and humanity, but even their own deliberate compacts. The admirable letter of Mr. Glendy, in which the Resolutions of the Assembly have been so completely dissected, together with Dr. Ledlie's two powerful and touching letters on the Eustace-street case, will be delivered with the present number of the *Bible Christian* to each subscriber, so that we need not farther notice them here, than to direct attention to them, and to commend the liberality and judiciousness of the Unitarian society in reprinting them, and giving them a wide circulation.

Nor shall we owe our escape, if haply we do escape, to the liberal and enlightened laity of the Assembly. Whispers we have heard of their disapproval; private expressions of dissatisfaction have been uttered; yes, and one or two *anonymous* letters have been written; but so entirely are they subjected to the control of the clergy, that no manly voice has been raised, no public remonstrance has been made against their course of injustice and oppression, except by the Committee of the First Congregation in Bangor, whose spirited Resolutions, late though they have been, do them much honour, and entitle them to our respect and gratitude.

THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

We find it impossible to give in detail the judgments delivered by the Lord Chancellor and Lord Cottenham, in the appeal on the validity of marriages celebrated by Dissenting ministers between parties—one of whom belongs to the Established Church. The result we understand to be, that the judges are unfavourable to the validity of their marriage; that three law Lords—Lords Den-

man, Brougham, and Campbell — are favourable; and that this state of things is equivalent to a decision against us. It is agreed, that an Act of Parliament must be passed to define the law, and regulate our privileges in this matter. We hope that such Act, when introduced, will be sufficiently general in its nature to comprehend all classes of Dissenters; and we should be well pleased if some provisions were added, requiring certain previous notice of the intended contract of marriage, so as to put an end to those hasty marriages that are so much to be avoided, without, at the same time, being incumbered with tedious and expensive forms.

UNITARIAN SOCIETY, MONTREAL.

We are gratified to hear of the healthy and promising condition of this infant society under the pastoral care of our friend and brother, the Rev. J. Cœrdner. In addition to the ordinary efforts which they are making as a Christian church, to promote the cause of pure and undefiled religion, they have established a monthly periodical, entitled, *The Bible Christian*, which, judging from two numbers we have seen, is well calculated to accomplish the holy work to which it is devoted. Its motto is, TRUTH, HOLINESS, LIBERTY, AND LOVE: "to extend the influence of these," says the Editor, "and thoroughly to establish them in the world and in men's hearts, shall be our primary aim. Our efforts may be humble, but we trust they shall always be earnest." We learn from the first number, that at a meeting of the members, held on December 25th, for the purpose of regulating the affairs of the congregation, Resolutions were passed, acknowledging the sympathy and aid which they had received from the American, London, and Belfast Unitarian societies. The Report presented at that meeting was highly favourable; and we have since learned that they have organized a Sunday School to which the Northern Sunday-school Association have granted a stock of books.

APPROACHING MEETING OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

We believe that the annual meeting of the Northern Sunday-school Association will be held in the beginning of next month, and we trust that nothing will be wanting on the part of the friends of the Sunday School, to render it numerous, interesting, and instructive. We know that the Committee have been actively engaged in promoting the objects of the Association, and we expect that their report will be more varied and interesting than hitherto. We would respectfully suggest, that arrangements be made to afford superintendents and ministers from the country, an opportunity of making remarks which they may deem calculated to increase the efficiency of Schools, or the usefulness of the Society. Of course we expect that ministers will attend, especially as the management of the Society devolves chiefly on laymen, and they deserve the countenance and encouragement of the clergy. We hope that the singing of appropriate hymns may be made a part of the devotional exercises.

OBITUARY.

DIED—In Belfast, on Saturday the 17th February, 1844, **THOMSON**, fourth son of the late **JOHN GALT SMITH**, aged 23 years. His days on earth were few; but they were full of love and peace:—the remembrance of his pure and amiable virtues, and of the Christian graces which his whole character displayed, will prove a balm to the wounds which his loss has occasioned in many affectionate hearts. To persons in the period of life which he had attained, he may be held forth as an example of zeal in the promotion of the best interests of his fellow-creatures:—for there was no means of usefulness within his reach which he did not eagerly embrace:—he was especially distinguished by his exertions in the cause of Sunday-school education, in connexion with the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast; and he took a warm interest in that of the Remonstrant Congregation of Newry, on his removal to that neighbourhood. These exertions were sustained and prompted by a spirit of piety, fervent but unobtrusive, enlightened and liberal. His religious convictions, which had been his guide through life, were his consolation in the prospect of dying: and he often testified his thankfulness for the strength and peace which they bestowed. To dwell on virtues such as his, would be a pleasing task, but it would be at variance with the unostentatious character in which they were displayed: they are therefore left in the retirement which he loved; by those who knew him best they will never be forgotten.

Died—On the 11th March, aged 89, **ELIZABETH**, relict of Mr. **HUGH CLELAND**, late of Killinchy-Woods, Parish of Kilmore. A genuine Christian of the good old school, she was much and deservedly esteemed for her unaffected sincerity, kindness of heart, and her truly charitable disposition. Possessed of a cheerful temper, a good understanding, and a retentive memory, her society was agreeable and entertaining. In her religious profession, she was a Presbyterian of the "Newlight," or Unitarian persuasion; having been brought up under the ministry of the late Dr. Moses Nelson, of Kilmore, whose enlightened and admirable exposition of Scripture she well remembered. Having been early taught to exercise her understanding, and to take her religion from the Bible, she was not one of the "silly women" who are "led captive" by the seductive but erroneous doctrines of popular creeds, but was a consistent and devout worshipper of "One God the Father," and a firm believer in the Lord Jesus Christ as her only Mediator and Redeemer. The efficacy of these great principles of the Christian faith was manifested in the sterling virtues of her life, and in the composure and peace of her dying hour.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been obliged to put aside our "Leaf for Children," articles of Review, and American and English Intelligence, to make room for the report of the Eustace-street case.

The author of the work entitled, "Faith divested of Mystery," reviewed in our February number, has written to us, stating that he does not believe the Holy Spirit to be a Person in the Trinitarian sense, as might be supposed from a passage in the Review.

THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. V.

MAY, 1844.

VOL. VII.

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM.

BY R. C. WATERSTON.

THE sea of Galilee was resting in the shadow of the dark mountains, by which, except upon the southern side, it was surrounded. On the east, the summits of Lebanon ran in an undulating chain, here presenting a high wall of rock, and there a green slope, smiling in quiet fertility. At the northern end of the lake a plain opened, through which the Jordan peacefully flowed, pouring its transparent waters into this inland sea. Here Jesus had spent some of the most eventful days of his life. Over these waters he had often passed. Here he had stilled the tempest, and walked upon the waves. From this place he had chosen some of his most faithful followers. To these solitudes he had often retired to meditate and pray. Here his eye had traced the grand outline of the Judean hills, and rested upon the beautiful lake that slumbered below. Jesus and his disciples had now passed over this sheet of water, and landed at the upper end of the lake, from whence they proceeded about thirty miles to Cesarea Philippi, which is at the foot of Mount Hermon. This journey was private, for the Saviour wished to be alone with his disciples. A new era in his history was approaching. His earthly career was about to close. With prophetic vision he could see the cross upon Mount Calvary. And he knew that the disciples were as yet unconseious of the death he should die, and the bitter trials through which they must pass. Their unsuspecting minds were filled with bright hopes, and Jesus had taken them apart that they might spend a brief season together. He was willing to be away from the snares of Herod, that he might

instruct and strengthen his disciples, before they would be as sheep scattered abroad having no shepherd. Could they bear the bitter disappointments which awaited them? Did they yet understand the true nature of Christ's kingdom, and the character of his mission? The multitude were looking for an outward deliverer. The whole nation was filled with an intense longing for some mighty Redeemer who would free them from worldly evil; but Jesus had come as the Anointed of Heaven. Not as a national prophet or prince, but as a mediator between God and man. Not with pomp and regal splendour, but as the meek champion of truth, and the spiritual Saviour of souls. Then, as now, there were various opinions respecting Jesus. And as his labours were so soon to close, he wished to inquire respecting the ideas entertained by the people, of his character and mission, and particularly to impart to the disciples views which should be correct. Jesus therefore said, "Whom do men say that I am?" The disciples replied, "Some say thou art John the Baptist, and some Elias, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." Jesus then put the question directly to the disciples themselves, "But whom say ye that I am?" Then Peter, with ardent feelings, instantly replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" and Jesus, when he saw the strong zeal and courageous spirit of this disciple, and the earnestness with which he proclaimed his Messiahship, designated him as one who would be a distinguished labourer in the cause of Christianity. He would proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, and stand like a rock amid conflicting dangers.

Jesus looked with love upon that bold and honest nature, that strong and ready faith. He saw, under Peter's impetuous temper an inflexible spirit. Jesus knew that he, when fully brought under the influence of truth, would become one of the most powerful agents in establishing the kingdom of right. Hence Christ spake unto him words of encouragement, words which would aid him when he should be called to pass through fiery trials; words which would not be forgotten by others, when he should take his place among the most illustrious of the Apostles. The Jewish student, when he became a Doctor of Law, had the key of that part of the Temple where the sacred books were kept, placed in his hands as a sym-

bol of power. Thus the Saviour, as his personal ministry was drawing to a close, figuratively said to his listening disciple, "You shall hold the key that will admit both Jew and Gentile to my kingdom. Go forth with this, and many shall be admitted through your instrumentality. In the day of persecution, be firm, and even Hell itself shall not prevail against you."

Beautiful and simple as were these words of Christ, all Christians have not given them the same interpretation. The Church of Rome has maintained that the Saviour, in uttering these words, appointed Peter as his peculiar representative, the supreme and infallible head of the church, and that this supremacy and infallibility was to be transmitted in an unbroken line to all who should succeed him; that Peter was established at Rome; that the Roman Bishops were his successors, and that the supremacy and infallibility given by Christ to Peter has thus been kept in the world for the obedience of all nations. At a glance we may see the fatal consequences of such assumption. Around the Roman Pontiff, simplicity and cunning, martyr endurance, fierce heroism, and pious zeal, concentrated their forces. Greater claims were made, and greater rights conceded, until the Pope held the double sword of temporal and spiritual power, and, grasping at universal dominion, the seven-hilled city became the throne of the world. Who could believe, that from the simple words of the Saviour, spoken to Peter, could have been reared the most stupendous hierarchy the world has ever seen. That this church, assuming unrighteous power, should have gone on accumulating new force, until the followers of the humble fisherman of Galilee should have worn the triple crown, and planted their feet upon the neck of kings!

No doubt good has been effected by the Catholic church. It was not all evil, or it would long ago have fallen in pieces. Yet who can doubt that much of its strength and power has come from its profound policy? From its adaptation to the weakness of human nature as well as its wants?

The whole policy of this church has been to confine the kingdom established by Jesus to its own communion; and to exclude all who think otherwise than themselves. To gain a submission of private judgment to the infallible edicts of the church.

But the mind was not forever to be enslaved. And the spiritual kingdom of Christ could not always be so misunderstood.

Where does the Bible tell us that Peter was ever at Rome? Where does it state that his prerogatives should descend to his successor? Where does it confine Christianity within the communion of any church? These questions were beginning to be asked even in the sixteenth century.

Then came the days of the Reformation. A gigantic struggle of great souls to achieve spiritual freedom; to emancipate human reason from its thralldom; to claim for mankind liberty of thought. The Bible had been concealed from the common eye, and to millions was a sealed book. This blessed volume was demanded from the hands of the priest, that its sacred pages might be consulted, and its heavenly spirit imbibed. Here was a religious revolution. It shook the thrones of kings. It broke up the foundations of ecclesiastical oppression. A new spirit of inquiry went forth. The human mind, freed from its shackles, arose in the majesty of its freedom, to higher conceptions of God and of duty.

The idea of the Reformation was to enlarge the boundaries of the church. To call forth moral freedom. The Catholic church maintained that Christ's kingdom was defined by its own limits, and that a belief in its views was the key which would admit men to it. The Reformers maintained that that kingdom had a wider boundary. They denied the supremacy of the Pope, and, taking the Bible for their guide, maintained its sufficiency as a rule of faith and practice.

Such was the grand truth of the Reformers. But they did not themselves fully understand the wide application of their principles. They claimed for themselves more than they were willing to grant to others. They had used their own Reason in the interpretation of Scripture, but when others would use theirs, they were perplexed lest they should go too far. The churches of the Reformation gained an important step. But in the room of the one infallible church, sprang up many sects, claiming the same infallibility for themselves which they had denied to others. They thus became inconsistent with their own principles; and transferred the infallibility which had been

claimed for the Pope to the edicts of councils, to dogmas and creeds. Nearly every church contained a Papacy within itself. The kingdom of heaven was still confined to particular communions, and the doctrines were the keys that opened the gates.

The doctrine of universal toleration was not even then understood, and the kingdom of God was based upon the speculative doctrines which seemed, to certain of the Reformers, true. Thus the followers of separate Reformers considered themselves exclusively in the right, and considered that those who differed from them could never be admitted to heaven.

If Catholics appealed to the council of Trent, the Lutherans appealed to the confession of Augsburg. The Calvinists were bound to the Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly; while the Church of England pointed to her thirty-nine Articles, and, indeed, in these latter days, seems returning to ancient catholicism.

There is certainly no very great difference between those who are infallible, and those who are never in the wrong. Between those who maintain that the whole of the true church is within themselves, and those who maintain that there is no true church beyond themselves. If one man should not be considered infallible, why should the decision of several fallible men be considered so? Too often, since the Reformation, have Christians inconsistently been exclusive and intolerant to such as did not agree with them in matters of speculative belief.

There have, however, always lived men of more comprehensive views. We might quote noble words from many old Divines, distinguished alike for their learning and their piety, but we will draw attention at this time only to the testimony of Chillingworth: "I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon," he says, "nor the confession of Augsburg or Geneva, nor the catechism of Heidelberg, nor the articles of the Church of England; no, nor the harmony of Protestant confessions; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of faith and action, that is, — the BIBLE. The *Bible*, I say, the *Bible only* is the religion of Protestants! I, for my part, after a long and, as I verily believe and hope, impartial search of the true way to eternal happi-

ness, do profess, plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but on this rock only. I will take no man's judgment from him, neither shall any man take mine from me. I think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian, and I will love no man the less for differing in opinion from me. And what measure I mete to others, I expect from them again."

Such worthy views were found in many minds at the time of the Reformation, and from that time to the present. They are the grand doctrines which are true to that eventful period, and which are in harmony with the gospel, which said of old, "call no man master,"—and "why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" It was for this same freedom that the Pilgrims left their country, and came as exiles to the New England shores.

And hence the venerable Robinson gave such wholesome counsel to the pilgrim fathers as they embarked in the *Speedwell*—full of wisdom and of a divine spirit. "He charged us," says one of the pilgrims who embarked at Delph's Haven, "he charged us before God and his blessed angels, to follow him no further than he followed Christ: and if God should reveal anything to us by any other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry; for he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy word. He took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the Reformed Churches, who have come to a period in religion, and would go no farther than the instrument of their Reformation. As, for example, the Lutherans, they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw: for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them; a misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them; and were they now living, saith he, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received. Here also he put us in mind of our church covenant, at least that part of it whereby we promise and covenant with God and one with another, to receive whatsoever light or truth shall be made known to us from his written

word; and withal exhorted us to take heed what we received for truth, and well to examine, and compare it, and weigh it with other Scripture of truth before we received it. For, saith he, it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."

It will be seen, from what has been said, that there have been three views concerning the kingdom of heaven and the key necessary to open it.

First—Those who believe that that kingdom is connected with the infallibility of a church.

Second—Those who associate that kingdom with the infallibility of a creed.

And Third—Those who believe that the true kingdom of God consists in an inner spiritual life which all may acquire whatever their peculiar views upon speculative opinions, and which is alone the essential thing to bring man into communion with his God and his Saviour.

What, then, is the kingdom of heaven, or the true church established by Jesus? Is it not "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit"? Is it not an obedience to the Divine will?—a "fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ"? "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you;" it consists in faith, virtue, integrity, charity, beneficence. This kingdom was connected with the recorded teachings of Christ; thus did Jesus clearly make known the nature of his kingdom; "Unto you," he says, "unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God." This kingdom is to be sought after; "Seek ye," says Jesus, "the kingdom of God and his righteousness." "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom." "He went through every city, showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God."

Again; Who is forbidden to enter? Paul tells us, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." To Timothy he says that he shall be "preserved to Christ's kingdom by being delivered from every evil work." And the Saviour says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father." Thus we see that the kingdom of heaven is holiness, that

this kingdom is the church, and that this church is the true church, having Christ for its head. Here is the apostolic succession, not by the laying on of hands by popes or bishops, but by the influx of the spirit of God, poured out upon every devout soul from God himself. And where is this church? It is wherever holiness reigns, whether in the Protestant or Catholic communion. It numbers in its holy circle, the good of every name, whether they are Quakers or Episcopalians, Methodists or Baptists. It gathers in its ample folds Fenelon, and Doddridge, and Penn, and Oberlin, and Baxter, and Wesley, and Heber, and Channing. It includes the Moravians amid the icy hills of the North, and the Covenanters amid the rocks and mountain cliffs of Scotland. Wherever there is a pious heart, wherever there is a lover of God, wherever there is a meek follower of the Lamb, there is a member of the true Church.

GOSPEL WOMEN.

THIS topic does not seem to promise much of either copiousness or variety; but the consideration of the subject cannot be totally devoid of interest, and it may be full of instruction also. Amongst these pious women, we give, according to St. Luke, the priority to Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias. To her belongs this testimony, that she was righteous before God. As did her husband, so did she, walk "blameless." She was honoured in being the mother of the greatest of the prophets—the forerunner of the Messiah. She was the friend, relative, and confidant of the favoured Mary. In Elizabeth we see a good wife, the friend of her husband, and worthy of his confidence. Together they studied the sacred writings, and looked forward with the same faith to the fulfilment of the prophecies. She knew and appreciated his wishes; when the assembled kindred appealed to her on the disputed question of her son's name, her reply was instant and decided.—"And his mother answered and said, *Not so*, but he shall be called John." Thus we see, that notwithstanding the law of aftertimes concerning the celibacy of the clergy, the priest of God in those days, found a pious and faithful wife a solace in trial and "a help meet for him."

The next in order of *Gospel Women*, and the most important from situation and circumstance, is she who is peculiarly denominated "the virgin." Pity it is—and always to be regretted, that the Roman Catholic Church has, by her imprudent and exaggerated exaltation of Mary, and the profane titles that have been addressed to her as "the mother of God," robbed her in fact, of that reverence and distinction which are her due in every Christian family. This has been the natural consequence of the extremes that church has fallen into. From the holy and honoured Mary, the young mother should learn an example of love and faith, and like her, acknowledge in her offspring the child of God, not *her's* but *His*. In her the young maidens of a family might behold how well becomes the young, *feeling without passion, and faith without superstition*. And the young men thus know what virtues should adorn the woman into whose keeping they should commit their future happiness. Thus would we make a household divinity of her who was "blessed among women." Not to bow to her with an idolatrous worship; to set up a paltry image of wood, stone, or wax, but to honour her with the sympathy of the heart and the consent of the understanding. What the feelings of the unassuming young virgin of Galilee may have been at the salutation of the heavenly visitant, it is impossible for us in these latter days to judge. We would indeed, be astonished to see with our bodily eyes, an angel approaching to speak to us. But then such appearances were not unfrequent; on this point, those times and the present widely differ. We read nevertheless that "she was *troubled* at his presence." Great and full of holy awe must that promise have been to her soul which he now revealed: that for her, an obscure maiden, was the honour designed, so ardently desired, so long hoped for, so prized above all price!

Her first act was a wise one. She sought the house of an aged and holy matron. She arose and visited her cousin Elizabeth, who manifests that spirit of lowliness which was afterwards so beautifully brought out in the character of her son, when he was ready to confess, speaking of the Messiah—"The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose,"—and many other expressions he made use of, of similar import. In

this spirit Elizabeth exclaims on seeing Mary, "What is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come!" Nor does her meek visiter feel any personal exaltation, but bursts into an enthusiastic hymn of praise full of the sublimest strains of sacred poetry.

In the manner in which Mary receives the homage done to her holy infant, she proves how true is the saying, that * "silence is the language of the heart." "Mary kept all these sayings and *pondered them in her heart.*" This silence and observation seems to have been her usual method concerning him. Few were her words when she found him again, after she had sought him "sorrowing." There are not many particulars of their intercourse left on record; gladly would we have had them infinitely multiplied, but the very keenness of our desire is the best proof of the wisdom of that decree which has affixed an impassable boundary to our curiosity. Might we have known with what word his infantine lips first rejoiced her spirit! What was his first prayer? Was it taught by his mother? Whence came his first impression? What was the first lesson he learned? These questions we may ask, but who may reply to them? *No man.*

At the marriage of Cana, Mary ventures to suggest a wish; she knows, if right, it will be granted. Jesus tells her the time is not yet come for him to make a public display of his miraculous powers; yet, for her sake the thing is done. At another time, this favoured mother is found anxiously watching to shield him from the pressure of the crowd, and win him to think of himself.—"Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak to thee." But here he might not yield—his high duties forbade him to listen to the solicitude of his friends. At the cross the afflicted mother was found; there she was beheld with solicitude, and provided for with care; committed to the guardianship of *another son*, by him who through his own suffering was pre-eminently sympathizing and watchful for others. We have no way of learning whether she was prepared for this awful crisis; or, if, as the disciples, she perseveringly looked for the triumph of a temporal dominion. Whatever her opinions

* A certain French poet says:—

"Le meilleur avenu est l'avenu de silence,
Muet langage est langage du cœur."

were, of this we are convinced, that at this sad hour all the mother filled her soul—and it may be that there might be added to these feelings, a profound faith and a holy hope. “Our hearts burn within us,” as, in imagination we accompany her when she fixes her last look of anguish on that cross—and reluctantly obeys, as the beloved disciple draws her away from a scene too dreadful for her to endure. We are grieved that we are not allowed to know what were *her* feelings on the morning of the resurrection—but this is hidden from us.—Why she was not one of those who were “early at the sepulchre,” is beautifully imagined by the author of “Traditions of Palestine.” Our curiosity must again be restrained and we hear of Mary but once more, in the book of Acts, first chapter and fourteenth verse, where she is proved to have remained with the believers.

While considering *Gospel Women*, that pious widow must not be forgotten who “departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” She was no sudden enthusiast following the Lord and the world by turns as whim, circumstance, or fashion pointed out the expediency. Her piety seems to have been a steady and increasing light, and received its great reward in this, that she was present when the child of promise, the long-looked for Messiah, was carried into the temple by his parents.

Thus will persevering piety always meet its recompense; and though we cannot see the Saviour with the bodily eye, yet shall the pious mourner be blessed with still increasing views of God and of his Christ. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

The next in order is the woman who was “a sinner,” but whom we behold in St. Luke’s record, bathed in tears of unfeigned penitence, thus washing the Saviour’s feet, and wiping them with the hairs of her head. Two thoughts deeply absorbing, fill her soul. The purity of him on whom she is lavishing every testimony of love and reverence, and her own utter abasement. Tears for the one and love for the other.—“And she kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment.”—What can we say of her more than the Redeemer said; “She loved much;” and

we are warranted in believing that she obeyed the kind, the sacred injunction, "Go and sin no more." Many have concurred in declaring this penitent to have been Mary Magdalene. We cannot feel that they have proved it. Jamieson, in his "*Eastern Manners*," insists on her being the same with Mary the sister of Lazarus. To our feeling, he labours unsuccessfully; we are not able to perceive his grounds for the assertion to be at all sufficient. What though it may be doubtful who she exactly was (and her name is very properly suppressed), one thing is certain, that it is not the pure, but the proud who treats with scorn the penitent offender. Many women have deeply sinned, oh! that they all might come at last to the Saviour's feet; not in presumption, as if their former sins made them all the fitter to be saints, but in lowly prostration and deep gratitude, like this poor gospel penitent.

Joanna, Susanna, and Mary Magdalene, are mentioned in the eighth chapter of Luke; and the evangelist adds "many others" ministered to him of their substance—that is to Christ—and accompanied him and his apostles, as they went through the cities and villages. These women had been healed by our Lord, of evil spirits and infirmities. We cannot ascertain in our day, nor have we ever seen it satisfactorily explained, what may be exactly meant by the "seven devils," from which Mary Magdalene was delivered; might it not be a phrase used expressive of a deplorable state of lunacy? We are not able to perceive why it is supposed to prove her a sinner, nor do we take upon us to contradict it, for we cannot tell; we are only not convinced. A true and faithful heart she had, and with the other women waited on the Saviour, and stood beholding his afflictions, and marked where the body was laid, that they might come and embalm it as soon as the sabbath was past. They were indeed the first visitors at his tomb; to them the angel spake and declared the great fact of the resurrection; and to one of these was granted the high honour of being the first of the disciples who beheld the risen Saviour and conversed with him. Her grateful and hallowed affections, which could not for a moment forget her Lord, or forsake the spot where she had hoped to find at least his mortal remains, were recompensed for their fidelity by an honour, which in the

comparison, renders all the honours of this vain world, trifles not worth the seeking. Now he who would throw contempt upon woman, alleging that in the person of Eve she was the first sinner, let him remember that it was "the seed of the *woman* that bruised the serpent's head." That a *virgin of Galilee* was the parent of the Messiah, and that to a *woman* Jesus first showed himself alive, and with her first conversed, after his resurrection. From this distinction conferred on Mary Magdalene we cannot fail to learn that God has good things for them that love him; for those who watch and wait for their Lord.

Speaking of her who is at present the subject of our meditations, brings to our recollection what Mrs. Hannah More asserted concerning us; viz. that she never entered any of our houses of worship without thinking with Mary Magdalene—"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Such a sarcastic and unjust remark from so pious a woman, and so good a writer, cannot but deeply wound; but bigotry and prejudice will hold their sway even in good and holy minds. May heaven grant that such a severe criticism on our manner of worship may never in any degree be a merited one!

Let us go to the village of Bethany. There two sisters receive the divine teacher, but take different methods of proving their hospitality and respect. One, by a profound attention and deep silence, shows her veneration for his person and doctrine. She feels that "never man spake like this man." The other takes a more common-place method which might indeed have suited some high and worldly guest—but it failed to prove her faith in him who was the son of God, whose nobility was of heaven, not of earth. She proved that her mind, though a kind one, was less noble than her sister's; less capable of appreciating his character, or the distinctions worthy of him.

We have heard some object that the rebuke was a hard one—there we must differ from them. In the first place, no unnecessary severity was ever on the Saviour's gracious tongue; nor was he likely to dishearten by discourtesy those who desired to please him. No, but by pointing out to her the example of her sister, he might teach her to consider that, while she sought to show him respect,

she really dishonoured him, by employing that time in an excess of worldly anxiety and labour, which ought to have been spent in attention to his instructions.

We are told in another place, that "Jesus loved *Martha* and her sister;" and a most interesting scene opens upon us wherein these two sisters are brought prominently forward. Mark how exactly their characters consist with the former display of them; we might almost have known them for the same without their names having been mentioned. The heart of each being full of faith and love, they agree to send to Jesus in their afflictions. Jesus comes not; *Martha is restless*, she cannot calmly wait; *Mary sits still in the house*. They both meet him with the same words, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." Mary accompanies the remark with a deep obeisance; she falls at his feet. It is said, "when Jesus saw her weeping, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled." There was a delicacy of feeling, a sensibility, a reverence about her, that filled with love and respect towards her, the heart of him who "knew what was in man." He wept to think he found it needful to make so painful a trial of her faith. At the tomb Martha gives a proof of a want of faith and of propriety, which finds a rebuke from Jesus: "Said I not unto you, that if thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the glory of God."

The difference between the two sisters may be thought to be manifested only in trifles; but we must recall to mind the proverb which says, "He who scorneth little things shall fall by little and little." And assuredly, to be held in more or less estimation by him whose judgment is impartial truth, cannot be called a trifle.

We are allowed but one more glance at these two sisters, it is after the resuscitation of their brother. A feast is prepared for Jesus. Martha serves, Mary employs herself in acts of grateful love about his person; washing his feet, and anointing his body with costly ointment. This extravagance Judas through his covetous disposition presumes to condemn; then does Jesus bear fresh testimony to her character, and blesses her with his unqualified approbation.

We have now glanced at the characters of these Gospel Women who were permitted to hear the instructions of and

to minister to "him of whom Moses in the law and in the prophets did write." Blessed were their eyes that saw him, and their ears that heard him! But blessed also are ours. For we have been in this more favoured than they, that we have known something of the progress of his divine religion, and understand better than they could, its diffusive principle.

True—we have not like these sisters heard the voice of Jesus call our best friend from the tomb; but we have continually seen the sinking heart sustained through faith in the same Jesus; strengthened by a sure belief in his precious promises, "him, whom having not seen we love," and yet hope to behold. Nay, we are certain that nothing but our own deluded choice can rob us of this blessing which shall be eternal.

M. B.

DOMESTIC WORSHIP.

BY A. P. PEABODY.

A LAMENTABLE deficiency in the influences to which many of our children are subjected, is the lack of all the institutions of domestic piety. Are there not many of your families, where there is no domestic altar, no form of worship or of religious recognition, no stated time for religious instruction? Are there not many children, who have never heard the voice of prayer at their homes, except from their pastor, at some season of sickness or death;—many, who have never received from their parents (or, at least, not since mere infancy), a word of expressly religious counsel or warning? May we not trace to this domestic negligence the irreverent and indocile deportment and conduct of some, on the Sabbath, when under the care of their Sabbath teachers? I can hardly believe, that the utter indifference to religious truth, and the entire callousness of the young soul to the emotions of reverence and devotion, which have, in some instances, come to my knowledge, could have grown up in the hearts of children who had daily accompanied their parents to the throne of mercy,—with whom piety had received its consecration from a father's prayers, and the Bible from the daily and reverent use of it in the

family devotions. But I can easily conceive that themes, which the parent passes by, and never in any form recognises at home, and which are urged upon the child only by a teacher whom he sees but once a week, should seem to him void of all reality, authority, or worth; tedious, irksome, and unmeaning. The child, in such a case, is guilty; but the parent is so to an hundred-fold degree. You must remember, parents, that to a child, especially to an affectionate child (such as you either believe or desire yours to be), the highest and surest consecration is that of a father's or a mother's example. The family altar has been for the salvation of multitudes, and has been for the rising again of many fallen. Of how many confessions of penitent and restored prodigals has this sentence formed a part,—“I thought of the mention daily made of me in the morning and evening prayer at home!”

Let me strongly urge upon you this duty, both for your children's sakes and for your own. How appropriate, how beautiful the service! How natural, if there be a God, that they, whom he makes to dwell in families, and unites by common blessings, should together acknowledge and implore those blessings! How fitting, that, in a family of the frail and the dying, who yet would gladly believe that their love for each other cannot die, they should together own the redeeming mercy of him, in whom, though dead, they yet may live, of him, through whom alone they can be one family for ever! How obviously necessary is it to a sense of religious restraint and obligation in the young and volatile, that these subjects should be daily brought home to their minds, revived by repetition, and made to take hold upon their hearers by the constantly recurring solemnity of the hour of prayer! The service need not be long, or complex, or such as to tax the mind of him who leads it; nor need it even be in his own words. Nay, it ought to be simple and brief, that it may be wearisome to none; and the language of an appropriate form is often preferable to the timid and difficult flow of speech of one, who has not devotional language readily at his command. Only let the service be solemn and heartfelt. Let it not be, and therefore let it never seem, a *mere* form, but always a fresh, sincere, and fervent service; and it can hardly be, that your whole family will not imbibe the spirit of re-

verence and prayer, so that the chain let down from heaven will bind each with all, and all with God.

Do you feel that you are not religious enough to conduct such a service? For this very reason I would have you engage in it, and use it as a means of religion, as a pledge of your progress heavenward, as an instrument for daily strengthening good principles, and for keeping down and extirpating wrong traits of character. Or do you imagine that there is anything in your mode of life, your habits, your business, on which the spirit of your daily prayer would frown? Pray then, in order that you may concentrate the Almighty's frown where you know that it rests, and that His felt frown may drive you from every habit, association, or indulgence, on which you cannot implore His blessing. Or, although you own the obligation of this duty, have you so long neglected it, that you find it hard to begin? Will you not find it yet harder to account to your Maker for protracted delay in the discharge of an acknowledged duty? Is not that a false shame which leads you to postpone doing right? If any of you own the weight of this obligation, and yet have been hindered by such feelings from the performance of a service so appropriate and beautiful, why may not this very day, when you and your families are reminded together of the duty, be the best time for breaking over the restraints of diffidence, and establishing the family altar? Your children will rise up and call you blessed for it. You will command it by the smile of God upon those whom you best love, and his spirit of holy counsel upon yourselves in your arduous and momentous duties. And, when the earthly house shall be dissolved, you may hope with confidence to appear at the right hand of the Judge, with the unbroken circle of those, whom you will have daily borne to your God and Saviour in the arms of faith, into whose young hearts you will have breathed the spirit of prayer and praise.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN EUROPEAN SCHOOLS.

THE different or opposite religious instruction given in the schools of Europe, and the different modes adopted to

enforce religious creeds or opinions upon the young, would of themselves furnish material for a chapter, or even for a book. Of course, therefore, we can here merely glance at the subject.

In Holland, no instruction whatever, strictly and technically religious, is given in the public schools,—no creed, no form of religious faith, no dogma, nothing claiming to be an epitome of all Divine truth, is taught or enjoined. The Bible is not even allowed to be read. The only religious exercise which we witnessed in its schools was a prayer. At the morning opening of a very large school, a signal for silence was given by the teacher. A boy, twelve or thirteen years of age, was named; each scholar closed his eyes, and leaned his head slightly forward, while the boy called upon, in a reverent and natural voice, made a brief prayer, and the business of the school proceeded. It was the most reverent and devotional company of children we ever saw on any occasion. Not an eye was opened, not a head or hand was moved, not a mind seemed to be abstracted, or a thought distracted from the devout service.—The sentiment came forcibly to mind, how pleasant a thing it is to see those who “remember their Creator in the days of their youth.”

Religious instruction is allowed to be given to scholars, *as such*, out of the school, but this is not enjoined.

According to the late law of Belgium, the religion of the country (Catholic) is to be taught in all the schools. Dissenters, however, may withdraw their children during the hours of religious instruction.

In Prussia, only two forms of Christianity (the Evangelical Protestant, and the Catholic), are recognised or allowed in the schools; one of these must be taught; the parents may choose which, but there is no escape from one or the other. At the appointed age, usually fourteen,—all Protestant children are confirmed, whether they will or not, and made to be members of the church. The confirmation depends upon the child's having a certain amount of intellectual knowledge of the Bible, not at all upon his character or state of mind. If he does not know enough of the Bible to be made a member of the church, and to be admitted to the communion, he is sent to a Bible school, or remanded to his former school, to learn the Bible, after which, he is received. It is easy to see,

if this policy of the government prevails, that there can be no change in the religion of the country or of families, to the end of time. The descendants of Protestants are to be Protestants, and the descendants of Catholics to be Catholics; and should new light come with the millennium, the laws of the government will prohibit its reception. Whatever errors, if any, are in the present system, are to be retained in it forever; whatever truths, if any, are out of the present system, are to be forever excluded. Yet this is the land of Luther's nativity,—the birth-place of the Reformation. "I tell you again," said Martin Luther, "neither Pope, nor bishop, nor any man, has a right to put a single syllable upon a Christian man, unless it be done with his own free consent; and what is otherwise done, is done in the spirit of tyranny!"

It is but justice, however, to say, that in Prussia, much excellent moral instruction, in addition to the doctrinal, is given in the schools. As a warning to other governments, however, the incontrovertible fact should be everywhere known, that the reaction of the public mind, from the creeds enforced upon it, towards Rationalism and Pantheism, has gone to a greater extreme in Prussia than in any other country.

In Scotland, there is no law of the land requiring religion to be taught in the schools, but a public opinion, stronger than any law, effectually secures it. In all the parochial schools, the Presbyterian-Calvinistic faith is most sedulously inculcated. Indeed, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for any one, not a believer in joint Presbyterianism and Calvinism, to obtain a place as teacher in a parochial school. The school is the nursery of the church. Most of the teachers expect to become ministers, and they remain in the school only till they can get preferment in the church. In all the Scottish schools we saw, the doctrinal part of religion was taught vastly more than the preceptive.

But religion,—eternal, immutable religion,—is one thing on the north side of the Tweed, and another thing on the south. It is still another across the Irish channel, although the three kingdoms are parts of the same government. In the British realm, Immortal Truth is a masker and turncoat. In Scotland, she puts on one guise, in England another, in Ireland a third; and each is

so opposite to the others, that her most ardent devotees; so far from recognising their goddess when they see her in one of her foreign garbs, deny her, hate her, spurn her blaspheme and persecute her with might and main!

The only reason why there has not, long ago, been a system of public instruction in England, is, because the church steadfastly resists all legal provisions for literary and moral education, unless it can control it for purposes of proselytism. A long array of facts might be adduced in support of this assertion. We shall here, however, refer only to the last of the series,—a fact which caused a commotion throughout the kingdom that has hardly yet subsided, and will never be forgotten. On the 7th of March, 1843, a Bill, called the Factories' Bill, purporting to make provision for the education of children employed in factories, was introduced to the House of Commons by Sir James Graham. It provided for the establishment of schools in connexion with factories. For the superintendence of these schools, such a mode of appointing trustees was designated as would almost invariably secure a majority of members belonging to the established church. The clergyman of the parish was to be *ex officio* chairman of the trustees, to have a vote as a member, and, in case of a tie, to have a second vote. As if this were not enough to secure a teacher of the right religious profession, every appointment of a teacher was subject to the ratification of a bishop. The factory employer was empowered to reserve a certain sum out of the wages of each child, to pay for his tuition in the school, and he made himself liable to a severe penalty *if he employed any child who did not bring a certificate of having attended an authorised school. The parent was also liable for allowing his child to work, if he did not attend school.* In this way, attendance upon a school was made a condition precedent to the obtaining of employment. The option was, either to attend a school under the control and management of the church, or to starve for want of work.

The presentation of this Bill kindled a flame throughout the whole country. All denominations of the Dissenters,—supposed to amount to from one third to one half of the whole population of the kingdom,—rose against it. Meetings were everywhere held. Petitions and remonstrances poured in. The attack upon the measure was so

universal, and so impetuous, that the ministers abandoned the project, and thus the whole matter at present remains.
—*Common School Journal.*

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

No man hath measured it,—for it is boundless; no man hath seen its death,—for it is eternal. In all ages of the world—in every clime—among every kind,—it hath shone out—a bright and beautiful star—a beaming glory.

Look at the case of Saul and David. Bitter and blasting jealousy filled the heart of Saul,—and he “sought to take the young man’s life.” With hellish hate he hunted him, even to the dens and caves of the earth. But David conquered his enemy,—even the proud spirit of haughty Saul he humbled. And how? Not with sword and spear,—not with harsh words and coarse contumely,—for these did never touch the heart with gentle influence. No,—but with a weapon—simple as the shepherd’s sling, yet sure as the arrow of Death. ’Twas kindness! This killed rankling hatred, and left Saul to live. And when it had done its work, Saul said to David, “Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.” Was not here a victory,—more glorious, more godlike, than a Wellington ever knew?

See Joseph—in the hands of his wicked brethren. For a few pieces of paltry silver they sold him into Egypt. Providence, in kindness, broke the bands which held him in slavery, and made him a ruler there. Famine spread over the land her dark mantle,—and the cruel brethren of Joseph hungered. They went to Egypt for corn. And how now acted Joseph? More than once he filled their sacks, and returned them their money, and then he made himself known. “I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.” Here was kindness—forgiveness. And it crushed to death the spirit of jealousy, that had once made him a slave. He had conquered!

Come farther down in the world’s history,—and tell me, what word of all those spoken by the “meek and lowly Jesus”—the “Prince of Peace”—the “Saviour

of the world"—was best calculated to soften and subdue the hard hearts of his persecutors? Are we not pointed to the Cross on Calvary? Are we not asked to listen to the soft, sweet tones of that voice,—“Father forgive them”? Oh, here was kindness!

Look over our extended country at the present day. What has changed those miserable hovels of other days, where misery and wretchedness had dwelt, into the neat and beautiful abodes of plenty and of peace? What has kindled anew the flame of love and affection, in hearts long estranged and freezing with coldness? What has made happy the homes of thousands of wives, and tens of thousands of children? What, in short, has been the great propellant of the late temperance reformation, which has carried joy and gladness all over our land? What, but kindness!

Reader,—have you an enemy, whom you would make a friend—a neighbour, who needs repentance—a fallen brother, whom you would restore to sobriety and virtue? Forget not the power of **KINDNESS!**

POETRY.

THE DREAM.

BY THE REV. GEORGE HILL.

[The following dream was told to me by an old man, a few days since, and in these lines I have endeavoured neither to add nor diminish.]

Methought it was the day of rest, and worn with grief and care,
I met the happy peasant groups who sought the house of prayer,
And I was glad, when asked to leave the world's bewildering
road,

To hold companionship with those who went to worship God.*

We entered,—and the Pastor † rose,—and then the multitude
In silent adoration rose, and in the temple stood.

There youth, and age, and rich, and poor, were standing side by
side,

In prayer to Him by whom our wants are bounteously supplied.

* Psalm cxxii. 1: “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

† The late Rev. Nathaniel Alexander, of Crumlin.

To Him whose throne is in the heavens, and yet he stoops to dwell

With humble hearts, who seek his face, in lowliest hut or cell,—
To Him whose glories far extend beyond the ample sky,
And yet He marks the sparrow's fall, and hears the raven's cry!

The prayer was ended, and the hum of happy voices rose—
Methought we had forgotten there, our cares, and tears, and woes,—

To holy faith, and heavenly hope, our hearts were freely given,
And every tongue in rapture cried, "This is the gate of heaven." *

When lo! a radiant form approached, with eyes of ardent love,
She seemed a messenger of grace from the bright world above;
And in a low, melodious voice, she breathed into my ear,
"Didst thou behold my glorious Son since thou hast entered here?"

I answered, "No, who is thy Son?" And then, she took my hand,—

"Come with me," and her words bespoke persuasion and command,—

She led me to the midst, and there the whole assembly stood
In silent awe, gazing on one whose robes were tinged with blood.†

"There is my Son," the Mother said, "at whose auspicious birth

The angels sang, glory to God, and peace throughout the earth.
There is my Son, whom God hath called to sit on Zion's throne,
And who once died on Calvary deserted and alone!

"There is my Son, whom God hath raised triumphant from the grave,

He comes to you with grace and truth, not to destroy, but save.
The world's bleak wilderness shall bloom beneath his gentle reign,
And Eden's long-lost joy and peace shall visit earth again!"

* Gen. xxviii. 17: "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

† Isaiah lxiii. 1: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?"

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

THE UNKIND CHILDREN.

A TRUE STORY.

"Toss it in the air, sir," says one; "Hurrah! there it goes!" "Catch it, Tom, hoist it up again," said a well-dressed boy with a smart new cap.

There were so many boys, that I could not for a minute or two distinguish with what they were amusing themselves. At last the wind blew toward me a little cloth cap, not made, to be sure, in the fashion of this winter, but very neatly repaired, and quite good enough to be worn by any respectable boy.

A little boy ran after the cap, and tried to get it from the others. His head was bare, therefore I concluded it was his. "Oh! Charles!" said he, "give me my cap—it will be all dirty." But the reckless Charles answered by kicking it up in the air again, crying out—"Hurrah for the Dutchman's cap." This stroke of wit, as they all appeared to think it, caused a loud laugh, and one said he bought it from some Dutchman; "Who did you buy it of, eh?"

The little mortified owner of the cap was at last with difficulty kept from tears, and the gentlemen, having had enough of sport, allowed him to walk home with it, brushing it as well as he could, and trying to get it in shape again, the tears now and then starting to his eyes, and his face colouring at the recollection of the insulting, unkind treatment he had experienced from his school-fellows.

When this little boy came home, I heard him say to his mother,—"I cannot wear this cap again." "Why not?" said his mother. "Why, the other boys have new caps, and they call mine a Dutchman's cap."

This little boy's mother was obliged to be very economical and saving in his clothing, that she might be enabled to give him a good education, and she said, "I cannot afford to get you a new cap like the other boys—you know we are not rich, as many of them are." "But the boys all laugh at me as I go along the street, and knock my cap off in the dirt, and that makes me feel so, I don't know what to do—Oh! mother, get me a new cap."

"I would if I could," said his mother, "but you know

I am poor." She looked sorrowful at him and said, "Your school-fellows must be very *unkind* and *thoughtless* children. But though their behaviour discovers ignorance and very foolish pride, you must endeavour to bear it with patience and firmness, and show them, by your conduct, that a boy's character is not determined by the shape or quality of his clothes. You need not be ashamed to own that your parents have not much money, and are unable to purchase for you smart and fashionable clothing. Be ashamed of bad behaviour, and pray to the Lord to give you a new, clean heart, and, if you get his favour, the laugh and insult of the world will not give you much uneasiness."

One word to children who behave to their school-fellows as these boys did. A noble, well bred, especially a *Christian* child, will know that dress does not make a gentleman or lady; that as far as this is concerned, they are most respectable who are not meanly ashamed to dress according to their circumstances. A wicked heart, and a mean disposition are often found under fashionable clothes, Our Lord Jesus Christ was very poor in outward things, and did not take his rank among the gay and fashionable of the earth, but this did not take from him his real dignity. And sure I am, that any child who would be like him, could not be guilty of the unkind behaviour of these children.

EVENING HYMN.

Thou from whom we never part;
Thou whose love is everywhere;
Thou who seest every heart,
Listen to our evening prayer.

Father! fill our souls with love,
Love unfading, full, and free;
Love, no injury can move,
Love that ever rests on Thee.

Heavenly Father! through the night,
Keep us safe from every ill;
Cheerful, as the morning light,
May we wake to do thy will.

From the Child's Friend.

REVIEW.

On the Celebration of the Anniversary of our Saviour's Instituting the Lord's Supper. By H. HAWKES, B.A. F.L.S. London: J. Chapman. Pp. 16.

THIS pamphlet, which contains a brief but appropriate service for the public celebration of the Eucharist, is chiefly interesting on account of the preliminary remarks in which the author recommends the observance of this rite of our religion on the anniversary of the evening when it was instituted by our Lord. We agree with him in thinking it strange that this event, the date of which is known with some accuracy, should not be marked by an anniversary celebration; while other events, the aim of which is wrapped in obscurity, have been thus celebrated. The author informs us, that he and the congregation of Portsmouth, with which he is connected, had, last year, celebrated the Lord's Supper on the evening preceding Good Friday, and he thus notices the impression which it made:—

"I shall never forget that evening, and I feel sure that there are many others that never will. It was solemnly delightful: it was unlike everything else we had enjoyed together as a brotherhood of Christians. * * * Some sat down that had never joined us at the Lord's table before, and an interest was called forth in the divine associations clustering about the memorial, that probably none of the most constant of our communicants had ever felt before. * * * There was a feeling of certainty that seemed to join us more closely to Jesus,—a felt reality, like inspiration, calm and warm the spirit rose, our souls deepened in tone, and we returned strengthened in the Lord, knit together in more fervent ties of brotherhood."

Family Prayers, with Occasional Prayers, and Select References to the Holy Scriptures, Adapted to Family Worship. By BENJAMIN CARPENTER. London: J Green. Pp. 150.

THIS volume contains forms of prayer for three weeks, and prayers for particular occasions, selected from various authors, especially from Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying." Each of the forms of Family Prayer is headed by a reference to a portion of the Psalms or

Proverbs suitable to be read in conducting domestic worship, and there is subjoined a table of Scripture lessons, which will be found an important aid to him who presides at the family altar. It is cheering to know that the demand for books of prayer has so much increased of late in our denomination, as may be best proved by the increase of such publications. We cannot imagine any greater aid to the cultivation of religion, than piety at home; and we know no greater obstacle to growth in grace, than the habitual neglect of this interesting service.

The Juvenile Miscellany of Facts and Fiction, with Stray Leaves from Fairy-land. No. 1, January 1844. London: Houlston and Stoneman.

We welcome every effort to convey instruction to the minds of children, and we are therefore glad to know that another periodical, devoted to this interesting portion of society, has been started. Judging from the number before us, the Miscellany deserves to be supported: it contains instruction with amusement, and possesses the additional recommendation of being extremely cheap.

INTELLIGENCE.

BIRMINGHAM UNITARIAN DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY.

THE fourth anniversary sermons in aid of the "General Fund" of this institution, were preached on Sunday, February 25th, by the Rev. G. A. Armstrong, A.B. of Dublin, in the morning, at the Old Meeting-house, from Proverbs iii. 9,—"Honour the Lord with thy substance;" and in the evening, in the Unitarian Chapel, Newhall-hill, from 2 Cor. viii. and part of the fourth verse,—“That now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want.” Each discourse formed a powerful and irresistible appeal to the best feelings of the heart in behalf of our suffering brethren, and, in short, left nothing to be desired by the friends of the mission; and, although the very unfavourable state of the weather (it having rained in torrents until after the commencement of the morning service) prevented many from attending, the collections amounted to £50 : 6 : 7. being full £6 more than last year, and £12 more than the previous year.

On Tuesday evening, February 27th, the fourth annual general meeting was held in the large school-room under the Newhall-hill

Chapel, when the most numerous assemblage of subscribers and friends to the mission which has yet taken place, sat down to tea, and completely filled the whole of the tables in the spacious and commodious apartment. The social repast being finished, an original hymn, written for the occasion, was sung, when the chair was taken by T. Eyre Lee, Esq. president, who briefly addressed the meeting.

Mr. Earl, one of the secretaries, then read the report of the committee for the past year, which was particularly satisfactory.

The adoption of the report was moved by Thomas Weston, Esq. mayor, in a neat and effective speech, and seconded by Samuel Kenrick, Esq.

The Rev. Hugh Hutton then addressed the meeting, and, in a speech of great force, advocated the claims of the Rev. G. A. Armstrong to the cordial thanks of the meeting, for his valuable services; and, warmly reprobating the conduct of that party who were attempting to spoil our fellow-worshippers in Ireland of their dearest rights, moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Worsey:—"That the cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to the Rev. G. A. Armstrong, of Dublin, for the very excellent and appropriate discourses delivered by him on Sunday last; and that this meeting desires to express its sympathy with our brethren in Ireland on the threatened spoliation of their rights and properties."

The Rev. G. A. Armstrong thanked the meeting for the resolution they had passed, and for the warm and cordial manner in which his name had been received. It made him truly happy, and filled his heart with gratitude to the great Being who alone can prosper all our efforts, to receive such a testimony, that the little in his power to do had been of any service to a cause which he looked upon as of the last importance, and which should be dear to every man who had at heart the honour of his Maker, or the welfare of his race. He begged to thank them most sincerely for the opportunity they had given him of being present on this interesting occasion, and for the unmixed pleasure he had derived from all he had seen and heard since he had come among them, of the practical working of their valuable institution. It was in such works he most delighted to meet his Unitarian brethren at home or abroad. It was in such works that true zeal for the religion of Christ consisted, and in such, therefore, it behoved them to strive in a holy emulation with their brother Christians. All around were up and stirring in the cause of the education of the poor, and the dissemination of what they believed to be the precepts of the gospel, and *they*, above all others, should not be idle; it would least become them—Unitarians—who perhaps, of all Christians, *talked* most of charity, and laid most stress on the beauty and the practice of universal benevolence, as inculcated by the religion of Jesus, in a season of such general, such generous activity, to sit by, idle and unconcerned spectators of the good which, he rejoiced to say, others were effecting. They could not, as a religious deno-

mination, be in a perfectly healthy state, they could not have their foot planted firmly on the ground, till they had the poor amongst them, and not only amongst them, but in full and active sympathy and co-operation with them and with their principles. It was not enough to be able to say (as he had often heard it said), that they counted amongst them men of the first respectability and wealth, of cultivated intellects, and refined understandings. All this was very well, and he rejoiced that it was so, but this in itself, or rather *by itself*, was anything but a sign of Christian health. Christ himself appealed to it as a powerful proof of his own mission from heaven, that *the poor* had his glad tidings preached to them, and if they were not preaching the gospel to the poor, they were not following, as they ought, the example of their Lord.

On the part of himself and his brethren in Ireland, he (Mr. A.) thanked them from his heart for the sympathy they had expressed. Since he left Dublin, a decision had been pronounced by the Irish Chancellor, wresting from one of the congregations there (on his, the Chancellor's, own admission, at least eighty years Unitarian), their chapel and all their funds, even those contributed by members of the congregation still alive. He had driven out an aged minister, for upwards of *fifty-six* years the avowed Unitarian teacher of his flock, and deprived him of his right to that support for his widow in the event of his decease, which had been raised by his congregation during his own ministry. He had also ejected another minister, advanced in life, and thrown him on the world, with a numerous, unprovided family, and with nothing before them (for anything he, the Lord Chancellor, knew) but starvation, taking from him, *because he was an Unitarian!!* funds raised by Unitarians for his support.

But, after all, these assaults upon their property formed but a small portion of the martyrdom they were called upon to suffer. He (Mr. A.) need not tell them that they dare not raise their voice in defence of what appeared to them the purity of the religion of their Redeemer, against the force of fashion, and prejudice, and authority, and establishments, and the world, without being subjected to much and bitter persecution of another sort. He need not tell them, that they could not *follow their Redeemer* without being obliged by their fellow-men to take up their cross daily. He need not tell them how the blight of party religion was preying upon social and domestic peace, how the harmony of their lives was often interrupted, how the sacred joys of home were gloomed, and servants of the Prince of Peace spent their time in sowing dissension between those whom God and Christ had bound together, setting a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and making a man's *foes* those of his own household! But no matter how many might be troubling them on all sides, they were bound to form and to follow their own opinions. There must be no struggling against their convictions; there must be no deception used with themselves; there must be no weak, unmanly,

angodly concessions, to obtain the favour or escape the censures of worms like themselves. The path of duty was a path which, in the present crisis, *could not be mistaken*. They must walk in it faithfully and fearlessly. They must not shrink from bearing and avowing a name which uncompromising testimony to the truth required they should bear and avow, a name only endeared to them the more because it was a hated and unfashionable, a persecuted, and now a prosecuted name. He had no doubt, if they were but true to themselves, they should yet find that good would grow out of it all, and, under the blessing of Him who doth nothing in vain, truth be promoted by the very means which seemed most to prevail against it. Of one thing, come what would, they might be assured; the truth of God could not perish. Their views might be false. *They* were not infallible. If they were false, the sooner they were overthrown the better. If they were true, nothing upon earth could overwhelm them; the more they were afflicted, the more must they multiply and grow. If their counsel were of men, it must come to nought; if of God, it was vain, and their assailants must find at last that it was vain, to fight against God.

— Mr. Armstrong resumed his seat amidst loud applause.

Among the Resolutions passed in the course of the evening, was the following:—"That this meeting, rejoicing in the good which has resulted from the systematic visiting of the poor at their own homes, and recognising, in that practice, one of the most important and legitimate objects of the institution, desires to offer its sympathy and support to the Rev. Thomas Bowring, in his arduous labours, and its acknowledgements of the zeal and assiduity with which those labours have been prosecuted."

Mr. Bowring then delivered his usual annual address to the friends of the mission, which it is intended to print with the report. The meeting was also addressed by Messrs. Kenrick, Earl, M'Kean, Green, and others, and a vote of thanks having been passed to the chairman, the company separated, after a most delightful and soul-stirring meeting, with increased conviction of the value and importance of the "mission to the poor."

LOWER MOSLEY-STREET SUNDAY SCHOOL, MANCHESTER.

A class has existed for some time in connexion with the above school, for the study of natural history, which has excited much interest among the elder scholars, and has been the means of diffusing a good deal of information among them.

The members of this class held a social tea-party in the girls' school-room, on Friday, March 8th. About 100 of the teachers and scholars of both schools were present. After tea, they adjourned to the library, the walls of which were covered with the drawings which had been used during the last few months to illustrate lectures delivered to the class, and many of which had

been kindly contributed for this purpose by ladies friendly to its objects, and anxious to assist in their attainment.

The chair was taken by Mr. Thomas Duffield, who was the founder of the class; and has always been a very active and useful member of it. A report of attendance was read, from which it appeared that the great majority of the members showed, by their regularity, the value they set on the advantages offered to them. The museum connected with the class, and consisting of contributions from the members, was a subject of conversation, and a general desire was expressed to have it enlarged and arranged; the practice of seeking proper objects for it was recommended as a means of forming habits of observation, and of gaining that knowledge of nature which tends to foster proper feelings and affections towards its great Author.

PROCEEDINGS AGAINST UNITARIAN PROPERTY.

At the time we write, nothing is known respecting the fate of the Bill which the government have deemed it right to propose for the protection of houses of worship and other property for religious purposes, against the system of legal spoliation that has been commenced. While there is some reason to hope that it will be passed, there is yet much ground for apprehension. That the Bill is based on equity, may be inferred from the fact, that the Law Lords and others, in no way favourable to the religious opinions of the parties interested, have signified their approval of it. Many of the most enlightened and influential lay members of the General Assembly in Ireland, have petitioned the Legislature in its favour. Among other places we point with satisfaction and gratitude to Ballymena, Bangor, Strabane, Ballymoney, Derry, Rathfriland, Saintfield, Magherally, Greyabbey, Killeleagh, Holywood, Newtonards, and Ballygilbert (parish of Bangor), from which petitions have been forwarded, signed, some of them most numerous, by members of the General Assembly. The ministers, a few of whom have privately expressed themselves against the spoliating system, dare not to speak their sentiments; they have written themselves slaves; and they have no opinion but that of the leaders whom they serve. Till lately, we feared that the laity were in the same degrading bondage; we have now gratifying evidence to the contrary, and we trust that a respectable laity will yet vindicate the love of justice and of freedom, with which Presbyterianism was once so honourably identified. We should mention, that from Lisburn was forwarded one of the most numerous signed petitions in support of the Bill, signed by persons of all religious persuasions; and that a similar one has been sent from Belfast most numerous and influential in its signatures. Indeed, we have wondered that efforts were not generally made to get an expression of opinion on this subject from persons of every denomination. All should be interested in the cause of justice, and

alive to any attempt at oppression and plunder. We know that the members of the Established Church would not generally countenance the contemplated spoliation: might not the same principle, if carried out, disturb their own magnificent endowments?—And we are greatly mistaken, if the Roman Catholics, remembering how the liberal Presbyterians laboured for their emancipation, and, animated by that love of justice which is proverbially Irish, would not throw the weight of their influence into the scale of equity, and unanimously petition for the passing of the Bill.

In addition to other grounds of hope, we should not omit to state, that a most influential portion of the newspaper press is on our side; but our apprehensions arise from the untiring exertions of our opponents, whose numbers give them a mighty influence, and whose hope of booty stimulates them with increasing zeal; from the wide-spread, and deeply-rooted prejudice against Liberal Christianity, which has enlisted many just and honourable men in the ranks of our enemies; and from the danger, that those who have the means of protecting us, may be unable to resist the pressure from without.

Be the issue what it may, we trust that the cause of Christian Truth and Liberty may not materially suffer. If we be rescued from the impending danger, we shall not be ungrateful to our brethren who have sympathised with us; but if otherwise,—if the property which our fathers bequeathed to us as a joint-legacy with Non-subscription, be wrested from us, and those houses which were reared to the principle of Christian liberty, be perverted to the purposes of Christian Slavery, we shall cling more closely to those principles which we have inherited from our ancestors;—principles infinitely more precious to ourselves and to society than all the property of which *legal* injustice would deprive us.

TEACHERS' SOCIAL UNION.

This Association is composed of the Teachers and Superintendents of Sunday Schools of our denomination in Boston, with some also from Cambridge. It holds its meetings on the evening of the third Monday of each month at the Sunday-school Vestries in different sections of this city. The Pastor of the Society, in whose vestry any particular meeting is held, is expected to preside at such meeting, and to conduct its devotional exercises. The meetings are opened with prayer, and closed with singing and a benediction. The principal time at these monthly meetings is given to the discussion of questions connected with the responsibilities and practical duties of Sunday-school instructors. At different times within the last year and a half, the following subjects have been discussed:—The conditions of the Teacher's success. What can be done to induce scholars older than those usually found in these schools to attend? Are parents sufficiently in the Sabbath School, and if not, how may their interest be increased? Should

the Sunday-school teacher aim chiefly to impart information, or to impress the feelings of his pupils? Conversion—What is its nature, and what its value—of whom is it required,—and by what means may it be effected?

The last two meetings have been chiefly occupied in the discussion of the following questions—"Should Sunday-school teachers in their instructions, allude to the philanthropic reforms of the day, and inculcate any particular view of them?" Different speakers have taken widely different views of this question. At the first of these two meetings, one speaker thought he should not have fulfilled his duty as a Sunday-school teacher, if any child who had, for some years, been his pupil, was not, as a result of his training, an Anti-Slavery child, a Temperance child, &c. and would like to see each Sabbath School virtually a Temperance Society, Abolition Society, &c. Another speaker feared that if such subjects are prominent in the Teacher's instructions, the great Christian principles on which all these reforms are founded, and from which they spring, will of necessity be neglected, and thought it better for the teacher to plant the *principles*, and leave them to bring forth, as in due time they will, their legitimate fruits in the outward conduct of the children. Another speaker seemed to feel as if the teacher, in attempting to tell children definitely to what specific actions the principles of Christianity lead, assumes too high a responsibility. Another speaker considered that each of the three prominent reforms of our day was clearly based upon a great Christian principle. War, Slavery, and Intemperance, were the gigantic evils of our day, and Christian principle legitimately and irresistibly led to efforts for their abolition. The children now in our Sabbath Schools would soon be responsible actors in society as it is, and why should not the teacher plainly point to the duties, as well as warn them of the dangers, which await them? He would not have either of these subjects to be the prominent topic of the teacher's instructions, nor have the teacher go out of his way to bring in either of them, but as he proceeds with his class, would have him fully expound the principles of Christ, and clearly, but not dogmatically, point out their practical application at the present day. Children could not be taught by abstractions. They must have illustrations, and particular examples of the application of the principles we would inculcate, and *true and real* examples would generally be more effective than imaginary ones.

At the meeting at Rev. Mr. Huntington's vestry in November, the same subject was continued. Mr. L. G. Pray commenced the discussion. In his view, the object of the Sunday School was nearly the same as that of the Church. And as we would not desire that the Christian minister should make Slavery, War, or Intemperance, the leading topic of his preaching, so neither should we desire that the Sunday-school teacher should make these great subjects, or either of them, the burden and general strain of his instructions. But as we would have the minister occasionally,

and in a proper way, enforce his views upon each, and all of these great evils of our times, so would he (Mr. P.) have the teacher, whenever passages of Scripture came under consideration, which referred to these topics, clearly and fully explain their true meaning and practical application. Mr. Mellen next addressed the meeting, but we regret that we did not understand, and cannot sketch his remarks. Rev. Mr. Thurston spoke of the position of the Sunday-school teacher, and of the spirit of candour, frankness, independence, and humility, in which he should teach. Rev. Mr. Sullivan thought if the teacher were to give distinct instruction on subjects about which there is division of opinion in the community, he would be in danger of coming in conflict with the instructions on those same subjects, given by the parents at home, by precept and by example.

On some of these subjects it was difficult for even mature minds to make up an opinion, still less could young children understand them and entertain rational and intelligent opinions upon them. If teachers inculcated particular views on subjects of such magnitude, and complexity, their pupils being unable to judge and decide in such matters, must take such instructions upon trust, upon the teacher's authority. And if teachers give definite instruction in relation to Slavery, Intemperance, and War, why not also in relation to politics? Rev. C. Palfrey remarked, that the children now in our Sabbath Schools might, ere long, be residents in slave-holding communities, and might be tempted to become slave-holders themselves, and when northern people become slave-holders they are proverbially severe and stern. To him it seemed proper that children who are in a course of moral training here, should be educated with some view to the contingency of which he had spoken. He said (in answer to a remark of Mr. Sullivan) that all teaching given to children by persons of mature age, carried with it something of authority. It was incidental to all instruction given to children by parents or by any persons older than themselves; but this was not a valid reason for forbearing to teach them anything, and why then should it be for forbearing to teach on those subjects which the meeting were considering? Mr. R. W. Bayley thought that the *principles* of Christ should be first implanted in the young mind, and that their fruits, in due time, would appear, and that the Sabbath-school teacher should devote himself to implanting those principles. It seemed to him better that the child should have in his heart the principles from which right action on all subjects proceeds, than that he be specifically taught just how to act on certain particular subjects; and he seemed to think, that if teachers give definite instruction as to the application of Christian principles in particular cases, they must necessarily, and as a matter of course, neglect to inculcate and impress upon the minds of their pupils those principles themselves. A few remarks were then made by Rev. Mr. Everett, in reference to giving attention to evils near home, and on one or two other topics, after which, the services of the evening were closed with singing the diatonic hymn, and by a benediction pronounced by Rev. Mr. Huntington.

THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

Agreeably to a plan of agitation laid down by the general assembly, large and influential meetings have been held in various places, and numerous petitions have been forwarded to parliament, praying the legislature for a speedy and satisfactory settlement of this unfortunate question. It is right that the Presbyterians should exert themselves by every legal means, to secure the privileges which till lately they thought they possessed. Indeed, we wonder that the agitation has not been more general. But we cannot approve of the violent and bitter tone in which many of our ministers have spoken, at these marriage meetings, against the Established Church. Abusive language is at all times unbecoming in the Christian; and it is especially inconsistent in those who have proved themselves in bigotry and oppression, at least equal to those whom they so virulently assail. Some ministers, of the Established Church there are, who look with contempt on Dissenters of every shade, and resort to the pettiest means to draw away to their congregation the vain and the dependent of other churches. But we trust that the majority of them are animated with better feelings, and heartily regret the present condition of the marriage question. We believe that the ministry are disposed to view the subject in an equitable and enlightened spirit, and we hope we shall soon be able to congratulate our readers on its satisfactory adjustment.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

BRISTOL.—The annual Congregational tea party of Lewen's Mead Chapel, Bristol, was held on Easter Monday, and was one of great interest. There were about four hundred persons present. The best spirit pervaded the meeting: rich and poor met together; there was a desire to give and receive pleasure, and every countenance seemed radiant with satisfaction. Wm. Harwood, Jun. Esq. occupied the chair; and the meeting was addressed by Dr. W. B. Carpenter, Revs. R. Gibson, J. Bayley, J. Murch, G. Armstrong, W. James, and W. Staples. The chapel choir attended, and added much to the evening's enjoyment.

LYNN.—On Good Friday, the Unitarians of Lynn held a Congregational tea party. The Rev. W. Mountford, M.A. minister of the congregation, presided, and the meeting was addressed by the Rev. James Malcom of Boston, and several members of the society.

CHELTEMHAM.—The new Unitarian chapel in this place was opened on Good Friday, when the Rev. J. Kentish of Birmingham preached in the morning, and the Rev. G. Armstrong of Bristol in the evening. The weather was fine, and the attendance at both services was overflowing: many Trinitarians were present.

CHANNING'S WORKS.—The Rev. Joseph Barker of Newcastle has announced his intention of issuing a cheap edition of the Works of Dr. Channing, in quarterly volumes, monthly parts, and weekly numbers.

OBITUARY.

DIED—On the 7th of March, **EMILY**, the beloved wife of **JOHN STRONG ARMSTRONG, Esq.** of Dublin, and daughter of the late **Rev. Wm. Bruce, D.D.** whose name is matter of history in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The life of this exemplary woman was truly a continued preparation for that state of blessed rest into which it is our firm trust that she has entered. Without pretence or ostentation, free from all ambition after worldly display, it was her study to show forth the deep and pious gratitude with which her heart was ever filled to the great giver of all good, by the faithful but unassuming fulfilment of the every-day duties of her life. For some years previous to her removal, she suffered, without intermission, from a lingering complaint, which, while it obliged her indeed to forego many of the active duties to which she had been accustomed, enabled her to prove the reality of her piety and faith, by the more difficult performance of the passive duty of meek and patient submission to the will of heaven. During this protracted trial, her total freedom from that selfishness which so often accompanies so lengthened an illness, endeared her in a peculiar degree to those by whom she was surrounded. Her whole anxiety appeared to be, at all times, for others. She scarcely ever adverted to her own sufferings or privations, but fully aware of their inevitable termination, she strove, by enduring without a murmur to the end, to prove herself the faithful disciple of the Redeemer whom she loved. Nor was the period of her illness without its fruits to her family and friends. She devoted herself, through it all, with a more than maternal solicitude, to the mental and moral improvement of her children; and various little works, calculated to advance the ends of piety and virtue in their hearts and lives, were compiled by her during her tedious confinement, and printed for circulation amongst those who knew and appreciated her amiable and gentle disposition, and will long continue to sorrow for her departure from among them. Descended from a long line of Non-subscribing Presbyterian Ministers, she inherited all that devoted attachment to Bible Christianity by which so many of her family had been characterised. She took, to the last moment, an ardent interest in all the institutions connected with the Congregation of Strand-street, whose pulpit her father and her grandfather for many years had filled; and there were perhaps few desires dearer to her heart, than that her children should be brought up in the knowledge of those religious truths, which she had found so efficacious through life, and to which she looked forward for support in that solemn hour whose approach she had long been contemplating without fear.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are much indebted to our Correspondents for the numerous contributions we have received.

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the **Rev. C. J. McAlester, Hollywood**; or, otherwise, to **26, Rosemary-street, Belfast**.

THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. VI.

JUNE, 1844.

Vol. VI.

THE NATURE AND TENDENCY OF UNITARIAN
CHRISTIANITY.

To any one who has impartially examined, or seriously reflected on, the nature of our faith, it must be obvious that the doctrine—"There is one God, and none other but he"—however Scriptural and valuable this truth be, is not its most important characteristic. Neither is it, because it teaches the free forgiveness of our heavenly Father, without satisfaction, or purchase, that it is chiefly to be esteemed by us. These doctrines, though highly valuable, as vindicating the rationality, simplicity, and scripturality of the religion of Jesus Christ, are, in my mind, much inferior in importance to its great practical and moral tendency. Its chief glory is, indeed, that it enables us to love God as a Father, by the consoling views it gives us of his character. But a glory not inferior, and which it forbids us to separate from the former, is, that it teaches us to love man as a brother—to look, not upon our own sect and party only, but on all men, as members of one family, as children of one paternal God. This I regard as the very spirit and tendency of Unitarian Christianity—a spirit and tendency in which it is peculiarly coincident with the Gospel of Christ. It not only tends to divest the mind of prejudice, and to lay it open to the reception of truth; it especially teaches that God hath made of one blood all nations, yea, all sects and parties, whether in politics or religion; that he is the common father of all, and that in every nation, and in every Church, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him. The tendency of creeds is to keep up religious animosities between man and man. These naturally cut up the religious world into sects and parties.

Under new names, they preserve the old distinction, and consequent jealousies of Jew and Gentile. Like the good Samaritan, the mission of Unitarianism is to pour oil and wine on these bleeding wounds of the Christian Church; and like that of Christ himself, to break down the wall of faction, now unhappily existing betwixt Christian and Christian, and to unite into one the children of God that are scattered abroad. In fact, by teaching us to derive our religion, not from the creeds of men, but from the words of Christ himself; with him it requires us to "love our neighbour," to "forgive our enemies," and "to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us."

Such being the nature and tendency of Unitarian Christianity, it is exceedingly painful to hear Unitarians giving expression to sentiments equally intolerant, and cherishing feelings equally prejudiced against any section of their neighbours, whether in religion or politics, as those by which other Christians are distinguished. Far be it from me to defend or advocate a spirit of latitudinarianism or pretended liberality. That, our enemies say, is one of our besetting sins. If so, I, for one, will not defend it. I have no love for it; and please Providence, so long as I am able, shall prove my sincerity, by continuing to expose the error and unscripturality of their faith. Let error be exposed fearlessly and openly, where we believe it to exist. Let bigotry be censured, and hypocrisy be unmasked, where we have good reason to suspect it. No one was more severe on the Pharisees and hypocrites of his own day than the sinless founder of our charitable faith; and to denounce hypocrisy, as he did, with dignity and firmness, is sometimes as much our duty, as to enlighten ignorance or to speak the truth. All this may be done with fearlessness, and yet with a due regard for that charity which is the end of the commandment. But this is very different, indeed, from indulging uncharitable feelings against any portion of the community, for no other cause than that of their speculative sentiments. That the members of other churches should do so is not to be wondered at. They are taught by their creeds to look upon those who differ from them, as the enemies of the truth of God.—That a Unitarian should do so, that he should look on any sect with aversion, simply by reason of their principles, argues a strange ignorance of the direct tendency of his

own sentiments; and implies that he has yet to learn to divest his mind of prejudice, and to learn to do to others as he would that they should do to him.

But farther, if such be the nature and tendency of Unitarianism, it is obvious that Unitarians should be foremost, not only in proclaiming the unity and paternity of God, but in advocating every measure that may promote the brotherhood of man. For instance, Slavery, that foul blot, not only on our common Christianity, but on our common humanity, should excite their indignant and dignified remonstrances. They should let slip no suitable occasion of raising their united voice against it. The abhorrent doctrine, that man has a right to hold his fellow-man in bondage; that his bones and sinews are his brother's property; nay, that the tender mother and the endearing child are to be treated as cattle—bought and sold by those who call themselves disciples of Christ—nay, that the Father of mercies designed them for this state of servitude—no other doctrine so tends to vilify the great God and Father of all—none else that is so foul a heresy, so horribly anti-Christian, so derogatory to humanity. What signifies our faith, if it do not teach us to exclaim unceasingly against this barbarous practice, whether in the boasted “land of liberty,” or wherever found!

Next in atrocity to slavery, I would, without hesitation, specify War as the most destructive to human brotherhood, and consequently the most abhorrent to Christianity.—What is war, but duelling on a large scale—an attempt to settle a dispute or “point of honour” betwixt two countries, not by reason or justice, but by swords and pistols suited to the magnitude of the combat? For two officers to go out and fight, it now seems is manifestly “improper;” but for two Christian nations to draw the sword about some equally trivial point of honour, is still considered magnanimous and “glorious!” Even were it a more rational way of settling disputes, it is a method not allowed by Christianity. It teaches us to “forgive our enemies;” but nowhere commands us to slay them. It teaches us to “love one another;” and professing disciples of Jesus exemplify the precept by meeting on the field of battle to embrace in the death-struggle. Worshipers of the same God, believers in the same Saviour, testify their brotherhood, and obedience to the divine precepts, by the

herald and deliberate work of mutual destruction. Nay, on each side, they invoke the same God to aid them to destroy the creatures which his hand has made. And Christian Churches, forsooth, and assumed successors of the Apostles, are found to consecrate banners for the horrid service—to make them holy, that they may the more effectually excite to this work of blood. Even leaving out of view the work of carnage, it seems to me impossible to reconcile with Christian discipleship, the duty of a soldier. What is a soldier? One who has hired himself to kill his brother at the command of another. Has he, in his individual capacity, any right to take human life? No; God has said, “Thou shalt not kill.” What right, then, has he to hire himself to do that which is unlawful? First, he surrenders his own liberty of judgment to another; and, secondly, binds himself to do that, at the command of man, which he is forbid to do at the command of God. And for what does he this? For that “daily bread” which, in some instances, he continues, though I will admit only in some instances, to invoke of heaven! If this reasoning can be refuted, let it be so; but if not, let every Unitarian, not less resolutely than “the Society of Friends,” protest against the iniquity of war. I am far from attributing moral culpability to the gentlemen of the army. These have entered on the profession without thinking on the principle it involves. It may be that some have thought of it, and have seen reason to come to a different conclusion. These, it will be admitted, are the fewer number. And were they even more numerous than they are, their convictions cannot alter the nature of divine truth. Is war, or is it not, consistent with human brotherhood, and the precepts and example of Jesus Christ? Think of Jesus drawing the sword in his own defence? Peter did so, and he was rebuked for it. Yet his disciples, at least, by their conduct, justify the deed, and think it right to hire themselves out to slay their brethren!

But farther; the nature and tendency of Unitarianism is such, that its professors should be the strenuous advocates of every measure of Civil and Religious Liberty; the foes of oppression in every shape; the advocates of equal rights to all. “Do unto others as you would that others should do to you,” should be their motto. Nay, it is a

duty enjoined on them by the very principles they profess. They are not to be saved by faith only. "With what measure ye mete (say they), it shall be measured to you again." Now, far be it from me to say that Unitarians are in general guilty of oppression, or that they depart knowingly from this precept in their own conduct; but these very sentiments should make them the friends of the oppressed. In these days there is much talk of religious liberty; and it is usual for Protestants to boast their services in its defence. And yet we know that all religious sects are not looked upon, or treated as equal in these countries — that religious liberty is outraged by that very church which professes to be its bulwark: of civil liberty, too, we are accustomed to hear much; and yet all observation teaches that there are white slaves in Britain as well as black ones in America. It is not my intention to enter into politics, any further than to say, that in all our conduct, whether public or private, we should have respect to those principles of justice and charity which we profess to reverence.

The cause of Education, and the cause of Temperance, have especial claims on a sect, who profess to love their brethren, and to be, not believers only, but also followers of Christ. On these subjects it will be admitted, Unitarians are not more backward than others. But that is not the point. The question is, are they as much in advance of others as their faith demands? To be a follower of Christ is no trifling matter. With what devotedness he applied himself to the great work of man's amelioration! If we speak of education, who taught more assiduously the great principles of divine knowledge? If we speak of self-denying temperance, who so much denied himself as he who "had not where to lay his head"? What the Christian world most wants, is, to be baptized into the spirit of Him whom it reverences as Lord. Without this spirit, religion, however pure in principle, cannot prosper. Let it be the glory of Unitarians to excel in the true spirit of Christianity, as they surpass their brethren in the purity of their faith. And, whatever the persecutions to which they may be subjected here, they will, doubtless, receive the approval of Him who will say to those on his right hand, "*Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me.*" B. C. D.

SLAVERY AND ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION.

(To the Editor of the Bible Christian.)

DEAR SIR,—It was with unspeakable regret I read, in your last publication, an extract, on the above subject, from “Dewey’s Lecture on American Morals and Manners,” printed without one word of note or comment on the sentiments it expressed; sentiments, which, I hesitate not to say, are disgraceful to any man professing to be a teacher of that Gospel, whose essential attribute is “Liberty.”

There are some assertions made by Dr. Dewey, which, taken in their general sense, and in the great majority of cases, cannot be denied: such as, that “the slave has no fear of the famine that is frequently threatening the poor,” &c.—“He is not ordinarily scourged, or starved, or maltreated in any ways; his master’s interest forbids it.”—“Servitude is not a mass of toils, troubles, and woes.” “This is a subject surrounded with difficulties,” &c. &c. &c.—These are put forward as palliating circumstances, but such they are not, as I shall show you.

The slave, though not ordinarily scourged, starved, or maltreated, is yet so, unfortunately, on many occasions, though “his master’s interest forbids it;” so in this and in all other countries, the master’s interest forbids him to ill-treat any of his cattle, yet constantly it is done,—done by the master and by his servants, and so is the slave by the master and overseer; for confirmation of which, I refer you to Miss Martineau’s “Retrospect of Western Travel,” “American Slavery as it is,” and most of the American newspapers of the present day. Even Dewey himself admits the fact, that sometimes they are so. “He is exposed, no doubt, to be treated with severity, and *is so at times*,” and yet he tells us, “’tis not a *malum per se*, an evil in itself.” If it be not, what, then, is it? But if it were a “mass of toils, troubles, woes,” &c. the world would have long since demanded an “instant deliverance.”

But these are only the *effects* of slavery; ’tis to causes and first principles that we ought to go. His lecture contains false principles and sophisms, which dazzle and blind for a moment like a meteor, leaving no trace behind.

They must be dragged before the shrine of the holy altar of Truth, and their real character and tendency exposed by its bright and steady light; and, as Dr. D. himself remarks, "God forbid that we should set anything above the sovereign, solemn, eternal truth." "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hands, he shall surely be put to death." It is true that the Jews say, this only alludes to stealing, &c. a Jew, but the words express no such limitation; and St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, i. 10, says, "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, * * * men-stealers, liars." At all events, they were directed not to keep in perpetual slavery their brethren in the faith, and yet Christians, professing greater enlightenment, do it; and now Dr. D. shall assist me ("out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee").—"We are not saying that servitude is a slight evil: it is a great, serious, unhappy, unjust moral condition."—"That a MAN should be property, passed from hand to hand by a bill of sale, like an ox or a horse, &c. this must shock every natural and humane feeling."—"He is not a man that can buy a man without emotion." Could I add anything stronger?

I now proceed to contradict him. He says that slavery is not "an essential, instant, invariable transgression of the moral law, pronounced to be such at once, for ever, by conscience, like lying, stealing, crime." Now, in the last quotation I made, viz. 1 Tim. i. 10, lying is, immediately following man-stealing, classed among the crimes against the law, "at once and for ever, by conscience." It does not follow, that because it originated in wrong [oh, is not a wrong, a transgression of the moral law?] it is wrong to delay relief from it." Is wrong less a wrong for being continued? I believe it becomes greater, the longer it remains unrighted. Then he indulges in a simile, but alas! for him, it is not to the point, for the "feudal lord," with his "dozen miserable victims with their eyes put out," "groaning in the dungeons of a castle surrounded by precipices," is, I hope, a picture too cruel for an American slaveholder; and I believe the captives are an equally false picture (as a general one) of the slaves; but Miss Martineau and "American Slavery as it is," do record some histories of slavery composed

from similar paintings. I do not say that if a planter blinds his slaves, he should then turn them out to perish, nor do I accuse him of the wish to do it; the attempt at the simile fails, because the men, held as slaves, are in perfect possession of their faculties, and only want education. Dr. D. objects to our calling "the purchase of slaves a traffic in souls:" "such things cannot be bought or sold any more than the free air, or far-penetrating light of the sun. It is a buying of the use of human muscles and sinews." Now, Sir, here is a gross attempt by sophistry to get rid of a truth, a FACT. If I could buy a prison, containing men in it, would I not be buying the men? The men are confined in the prison, as the soul in the body, and as the slaves in America are often treated, as are also their friends who help them. I might put to death any man who would help them to escape, or even teach them to read; aye, even to read the word of God. If I did this, would I not be accused of taking away their chance of immortality? and this the planter does. Yet Dr. Dewey says, a planter don't "traffic in souls;" no, Dr. only in bodies containing souls within them. Dr. D. says, "The command over them is too absolute, 'tis for life; that is all wrong. But the same thing is done for a term of time" in the apprenticeship of boys. "A master-workman, or manufacturer, *buys* these services." Does he? No! but the parents of the child give the master money to buy his services to teach their child that master's art, in order that the child, when grown up, may know how to earn a livelihood. Thus is Dr. D.'s simile dissolved in its own smoke. "Is it intrinsically wrong, then, for me to buy the services of a coloured [why not a white?] man in Georgia [oh, say Massachusetts], supposing ["aye, there's the rub," SUPPOSING] it were my intention to benefit him [!], to educate him [!!], to prepare him [!!!] for freedom, and eventually to give him freedom [!!!!]?" Oh! Spirit of Liberty and Truth, canst Thou brook this canting hypocrisy? Is this the picture of an American slaveholder? "It is a wrong to be remedied, and to be remedied as fast as possible," says Dr. D. and so say I. "What, then, is to be done?" asks Dr. D. Let himself answer: let it be "remedied as fast as possible."

But Dr. D. says that Americans are "accused abroad

of a base and criminal apathy" upon slavery; if so, we abroad were wrong, we should have accused them as a body, of a "base and criminal" series of attacks upon the lives, persons, properties, and characters of all men who say, "Emancipate your slaves, and emancipate in time, lest you injure yourselves by delay." Dr. D. furnishes an instance: he attacks O'Connell — Dickens — Brownson, and others — Foreigners — English Criticism — Transatlantic eyes, &c. &c. Dr. D. is like all his countrymen who think with him on this question, very sensitive on the point in dispute; he seems to think the "cap fits him:" if so, let him wear it; but it is not the cap that we hear called the "cap of Liberty." No, it would ill become a man to have Liberty on his cap, and Slavery in his heart. Alas! how long will American hypocrisy continue to say, in the words of her constitution, "All men are born free and equal, and are alike entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Dr. D. says that "the clergy generally are not Abolitionists;" that is quite true. I wonder he is not ashamed to tell us so; but it has been already proved by the work, entitled, "The Church in America, the Bulwark of Slavery." There are some splendid exceptions, however; and one whom he calls one of "our soberest writers on Politics," Dr. Channing, and who, he complains, is abused as "timid and time-serving," uses the following *sober* language on slavery: —

"The first question is, not what is profitable, but what is right. * * * The right is the supreme good. * * * To hope for happiness from wrong-doing, is as insane as to seek health and prosperity by rebelling against the laws of nature, by sowing seed on the ocean, or making poison our common food. * * * Not a few dread all discussion on the subject (of slavery). * * What is still worse, opinions either favouring it, or extenuating it, are heard with little or no disapprobation — concessions are made to it, that would once have shocked the community, whilst to assail it, is pronounced *unwise* or *perilous*. * * The eternal law binds us to take the side of the injured. * * Man cannot be justly held and used as property. * * Man has sacred rights, the gifts of God, and inseparable from human nature, of which slavery is the infraction. * * Slavery produces and gives licence to cruelty. * * Re-

ports that harrow up our souls come to us. * * The notorious cruelty of the slave-dealers can be no false report, for it belongs to their vocation. * * It is the curse of slavery, that it can touch nothing that it does not debase. * * * Give the slaves disposition and power to support themselves and their families by honest industry, and complete emancipation should not be delayed **ONE HOUR.**"

I fear I have taken up too much of your time and space: I could not say less, and would wish to say more.

WILLIAM ANTISELL.

Dublin, April, 1844

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE SUBSTANCE OF MR. A. H. HALIDAY'S SPEECH, AT THE LATE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

AN apology for the Sunday School, though no longer called for by open opposition, is not out of place if it tend to procure active co-operation in the place of languid acquiescence, and to prevent those actively engaged in it from resting satisfied with present attainments.—The mutual adaptation of childhood and instruction even proverbial. Provision for that want and those capacities found in the divine institution of the family, and its protracted duration in the human race. The Sunday School comes in to aid—not, as has sometimes been objected, to supersede—parental instruction; an objection, which neither the representations of its friends, nor experience justify. *It* has rescued many from the daily teachings of practical infidelity; and often, through the growing intelligence and wakened religious sensibilities of the child, has revived faded impressions and excited unconscious energies in the parent, and drawn both closer together by a newer, holier tie.

To parental instruction, the first place must be ever assigned, admitting of no competition, and incapable of a perfect substitute. The ordinance of the God of nature and revelation, commits to the parent the charge of that education, which commences with the first exertion of

will, the first sense of accountability in the infant mind. And with the task, the means are given:—the dependence of the child on the parent for everything, with the authority springing out of this:—the affections implanted in the parental breast, and those reciprocally excited by their action:—and opportunity, in constant association under all circumstances. As intellectual wants enlarge, other aids are called in. Scientific and technical instruction is deputed, in part, to paid and professional instructors. A greater amount of knowledge, and greater skill in imparting it, is secured by the devotion of their entire attention to these acquirements. Economy of time and labour, in the business of education, is obtained by collective instruction; while the power of sympathy, and the stimulus of emulation, are brought into play. Hence the prevalence of public schools in all communities, but a little advanced beyond the first stage. The like help that common schools afford in literary education, the Sunday School is meant to provide in regard of spiritual culture.

The Sunday-school teacher, compared with the teacher of the day-school and with the minister of religion. The multiplied engagements of the pastors of our churches do not admit of much being expected from them, in the way of pastoral care, to supply the absence or deficiency of domestic instruction;—and the public ministrations, even in the limited degree in which they are intended to communicate knowledge, shoot over the heads of children, or, if accommodated to *them*, leave the rest inadequately cared for.

The circumstances of the time, and divisions of opinion among us, render common schools very insufficient in this respect; direct religious instruction being either excluded, or guarded with such precautions as make it seem dangerous and suspected. Teachers, chosen in reference commonly to very different considerations, will be often of doubtful efficiency for this object, and the portion that may be doled out, alternating with other branches to which more attention and time are given, is apt to sink into a subordinate place.

Religious knowledge, also, if it has its peculiar facilities in communication, presents its peculiar difficulties, which experience must admit,—amounting, as they often do, to positive resistance. Why is this? Not surely that this

knowledge, regarded in its displays, discoveries, and the affections it addresses, is uninteresting, or out of the grasp of tender minds. But religion does not merely announce facts, and excite sentiments,—it reveals a law, and touches the conduct at points innumerable. To the natural laws of our being, we are early and almost insensibly introduced and reconciled. The act and the consequence become indissoluble, and we scarcely dream of disconnecting them even in a wish. So it should be with the rest of man's being. And in the insubordination of the will to the spiritual law, all evil to us consists. Indeed, the consequences of infractions of this law are more serious, and not less certain. But they are not equally sensible. The *temporal* consequences often long in evolving, mixed up with so many connected circumstances, and modified by such seeming exceptions, that the will, interested against admitting the truth, easily procures self-delusion: while *future* consequences are matter of faith and not of sensible experience. Then the discoveries come unwelcome, that bring in with them a rule to which the will is unreconciled. Knowledge, unaccompanied with obedience, produces inward conflict and uneasiness; the mind, finding repose in ignorance, resists the ingress of knowledge hitherto conceived the vehicle of pain. And as the ears cannot be actually closed, the purpose is effected by the knowledge remaining merely verbal, never, in fact, understood and applied: or the heart, by habitual resistance, becomes cased for a time, and a high degree of critical, historical, exegetical, dogmatical knowledge may exist without influence on the character and behaviour. The two, knowledge and practice, like parallel lines, never approach or interfere.

Parental training best calculated to impart a knowledge which is intended to be thus eminently practical: by its command of the affections, and control over the details of conduct. The Sunday School efficient as an aid, by partaking of the domestic character;—in the nature of the agency, love, not self-interest, being the declared motive; and by the subdivision into small groups. Each class to be regarded as a family, the teacher sustaining the parental office. Advantage in the equality of age or capacity, and correspondence of dispositions, attainable by classification. The collective mode of instruction; thus

rendered feasible, appropriates to all the time which, parcelled out, would afford but a trifling fraction to each. Greater economy of time and labour indeed, attainable by the formation of still larger classes, as in day schools. But teachers, sufficiently expert in the conduct of masses, scarcely procurable without sacrificing the gratuitous agency. An intimate acquaintance with the individual pupils, and other points of assimilation to home education, also would be lost. Still, from the common school much may be borrowed to good purpose. The general principles of instruction common to both. Many details of order and discipline are similarly applicable, and the power of sympathy is brought in aid, if that of emulation is not, or should not be, equally participated.

The special prominence given to religious teaching by the Sunday-school system, contrasted with the limited or subordinate place it occupies in daily schools. The peculiar efficiency of domestic training indeed derived from the intimate connexion it establishes between the lessons and common life. Yet there may be also good in the occasional separation and distinct exhibition of religious doctrine. In the Sunday School, time, place, persons, all are stamped with their special destination.

Reasons for dwelling on the advantages of the Sunday-school institution. That the teachers may remember to seize the means of establishing that influence, which assimilates it to domestic education. That the previous training, considered indispensable for the teacher of every other school, may not be neglected, as unnecessary for them. That the brief and precious time may not be wasted in stationary self-complacency, or ill-directed experiments, for want of acquaintance with ascertained results, and elementary principles of education. The voluntary nature of the engagement does not dispense from the obligation; and common sense leads us to make such preparation for any undertaking that affects our own worldly interest, or even pleasures.

Further reason: that others may become actively interested in the cause. The Christian public, not unsusceptible of a warm and permanent interest in similar objects. Evidence, in the present position and growing power of other charitable and religious associations. But those who are the active conductors, must

themselves first receive and communicate the impulse. We must appreciate the worth of the means placed at our disposal, and be ready to render a reason to those who ask, and to those who will hear. While this institution sends forth messengers into the streets and highways, to gather in the vicious, the unfortunate, the neglected among the young, we must not make it a *first* object to keep a set of troublesome children out of harm's way for the hour, and secure a temporary quiet to the sabbath streets. And when we invite parents to send their children forth from the safe privacy of home, let it not be chiefly that we may partake of the parental pleasures and privileges, occupy the time without disturbance of conscience, though without the sensible constraint of direct responsibility, or relax from the conflict of worldly interests and passions, in the frank and engaging society of childhood. If our object be to complete the routine of Sunday occupations, and fill up portions of a day otherwise wearisome;—if, to associate on intimate terms with some at other periods removed from us by worldly distinctions, or to court the deference which any may be willing to yield—because, to teach, among others similarly employed, is more exciting, than to study the word in silence and retirement—because it is easier to be punctual, and even busy, an hour in school, than to be serious and collected in prayer and humiliation in the closet;—if these or any such be our aims and inducements, is it a wonder that our candle gives no light or heat to attract or kindle others? If weekly preparation for the Sunday lesson is deemed superfluous, or thrust into any corner of our time, and frequently postponed to pleasures, or unnecessary engagements;—if we never seek out, or seize, hints and methods that might improve our skill in communication;—if none of our ordinary pursuits or studies are modified with a view to collect materials for this use;—if the faces, as the circumstances, of our pupils, are wholly strange to us, weekly, from the close of one lesson till the next recurs,—shall we yet wonder and complain that others, observers, take the measure of their interest from our apparent indifference; that an object which influences us only in the school, and for the prescribed hours, should engage them nowhere nor at any time?

I confess that I feel self-condemnation in the utterance of these remarks, yet they are not to be avoided on that account, nor for the sake of others who may partake of the feeling, while they arise naturally from the subject proposed. These meetings are calculated both to evince and extend the support and countenance desired for the Sunday-school institution. Much is needed to enable the Association to meet the wants for which it is intended to provide, and to fulfil the purposes for which it was called into existence. I beg, Mr. Chairman, to move —

“That, next to parental instruction, the Sunday School presents the best opportunity of instilling religious knowledge into the hearts of the rising generation, and is therefore entitled to the countenance and support of every Christian.”

EXTENDED INSTRUCTION IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL:

THE SUBSTANCE OF MR. E. PATTERSON'S SPEECH, AT THE LATE
MEETING OF THE NORTHERN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

MR. CHAIRMAN,—The motion which the Committee have done me the honour of entrusting to my care, takes its origin from a passage in our last year's Report. That passage, with your permission, I shall read:—

“A desire has been expressed, at various times, that some more extended information should be imparted to the older children in the schools than what they generally receive; and when your Committee consider how elementary is the instruction afforded in the Sunday School, they feel that they can scarcely over-estimate the importance of any arrangement which would supply a stimulus to mental cultivation during the important period of life which succeeds the age at which children at present generally cease their attendance at the school. If, at this time of life, when the future habits and character are acquiring strength, the young of both sexes could be induced to attend classes formed expressly for advanced pupils and adults, much permanent advantage would ensue. The instruction there given might not only be less elementary than that imparted in the school, but also more extensive in its range. And that it might be communicated with an uniformity of design, and be of ready application, the Committee would suggest, that it should be restricted, at least in the commencement, to the geography, physical characteristics, and

natural productions of Palestine, and such extracts from the narratives of intelligent travellers as tend to throw light upon the manners and customs of its former inhabitants. While a desire for information might thus be promoted, your Committee cannot but hope, that additional interest might in the minds of many be given to the perusal of the sacred volume, and that it might be studied, not only as containing "the words of eternal life," but as affording more varied and extensive information than any book in the entire range of our literature. Whether this suggestion could be carried out, either wholly or in part, and to what extent it could be advantageously adopted, must depend upon circumstances, which in all probability are different in every school, and of which the teachers themselves are the most competent judges. But your Committee, deeply impressed with the importance of the object proposed, have felt it their duty to lay the suggestion before you, that it might be rejected or adopted as to you may seem best."

When the time for holding the present meeting drew nigh, your Committee were desirous of ascertaining whether or not the suggestions contained in this paragraph had in any case been acted on, and if so, to what extent. With this view, they directed their Secretary to prepare a circular, requesting information on the subject, and to have one forwarded to each of the schools in connexion with this Association. From the replies which have been received, they learn, that the formation of classes for the more advanced pupils and for adults, has in some places been effected; in others, the proposal has been most favourably received, though circumstances have as yet prevented its being brought into actual operation. From the testimony thus given in favour of the suggestion, and after the experience of another year, your Committee felt their conviction of its importance confirmed, and resolved to bring the matter before you this evening in the form of a distinct resolution.

When we consider that the education which children receive in Sunday Schools, though of high importance in itself, is necessarily very restricted, it is obviously desirable, that the instruction should not cease at the age of fourteen or fifteen years, as now it generally does. If it could be continued for a very few years more, if it could be extended throughout that period during which the boy shoots up into the man, and the school-girl is transformed into the young woman, effects of considerable moment with regard to their future characters and habits might be

produced. A desire for "self-culture," commenced in the Sunday School, and continued to maturity, might become habitual, and remain throughout the entire of the future life; a blessing to themselves, and to those with whom they are connected.

But it may be asked, "What kind of instruction do you propose for these adult classes?" I answer: the subjects may be numerous, but they should all be such as subserve directly or indirectly for the illustration of the Scriptures. The range of subjects may be both varied and extensive: but all should possess one quality in common; they should tend to elucidate, in some way or other, the sacred volume. Thus the course of instruction might, at its commencement, be restricted to the physical characteristics of the several countries mentioned in the Bible; their mountains, valleys, and plains; their seas, lakes, and rivers; their principal towns and villages, and the leading peculiarities of their soil and climate.

Such teaching would also embrace the past and present condition of these countries, and the manners and customs of their inhabitants. The direct applicability of these branches of knowledge to the illustration of the sacred narrative need not be insisted on; it is obvious to all. Without, for example, knowing something of the manners and customs of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine, the young are in danger of transferring their ideas of domestic life in these countries to another country and another era, in which they were altogether different; and in this way the most incongruous ideas may be produced. The teacher in the Sunday School would, of course, in reading the Scriptures with his pupils, briefly explain to them the meaning of passages referring to customs widely different from our own. But in the adult classes, this instruction would not be incidental, but systematic, and by judicious extracts from the narratives of intelligent travellers, could be rendered highly interesting and attractive.

The elementary knowledge of some departments of physical science might also, with great advantage, be imparted; as, for example, that of the motions of the earth and of the moon—the most common phenomena of light, and its influence on animal and vegetable life—the composition and properties of water, and the various aspects which it assumes in its several states.

To this might be added some acquaintance with the most remarkable natural productions of the different countries mentioned, but especially of Egypt and Palestine. Should we require an example for thus devoting a little time to the study of these animals and plants, it is not wanting, for we are told, that "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding, exceeding much," and that he who was thus favoured "spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes."

A course of instruction on the several topics now indicated, would form a good, wholesome, invigorating description of mental aliment. And it would not only be good in itself, but good also in its bearing on many passages of Scripture. Thus when we understand something of the annual revolution of the earth in its orbit, and its diurnal rotation on its axis, we approach, with a more enlightened spirit, the consideration of the means adopted for the fulfilment of that gracious promise; "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease. In like manner, knowing that for months together no rain falls upon the "thirsty" plains of Palestine, and that the sustenance of vegetable life depends, in a great degree, upon the abundant dews, we read with a livelier interest the numerous similes drawn from this source, and scattered over the sacred writings—we contrast the "thirsty land where no water is," with that which is made "soft with showers,"—"where the little hills rejoice on every side," and while we thus do so, we bless the Infinite Goodness, which made the simple element of water conduce in so many different ways to the well-being of man. But is water the simple element which it was believed to be of old? Has modern science made no new revelation as to its nature? She has shown that it is not simple, but is composed of two airs or gases, one of them indispensable to the existence of every living being—the other, slightly modified, is that which dispels darkness from our streets, and illuminates the apartment in which we are now assembled. We have, therefore, in these days all the causes of thankfulness and wonder, which the contemplation of water in its

several forms inspired to those of "olden time;" and with the increase of our knowledge, new causes for such feelings have been developed. Nor are they yet fully revealed—in how many ways does water, in the form of steam, now minister to the wants and requirements of man, and to what new and unimagined purposes may it not yet be applied?

I deem it unnecessary to dwell upon any of the passages, in which the wolf, the camel, the wild ass, the antelope, or other animals, are mentioned. The meaning of passages must become clearer, in proportion as the nature and habits of the animals are known. But I may observe, that for the illustration or enforcement of many texts of Scripture, it is not necessary that we should have recourse to the plants or animals indigenous to Palestine or to Egypt; the same mental effect may be produced by attending to those at home. We may there find examples of the skill, the wisdom, and the goodness of Him, who "in wisdom and in goodness hath made them all." In this manner, a train of devotional feeling is excited, which irradiates the "inward eye," and thus makes it perceive new depth, beauty, and impressiveness in many passages of Scripture.

In addition, therefore, to the several subjects already mentioned, I advocate, as a branch of education, Natural History, especially that of our own country. I desire that all our young people should be so educated, that their eyes should be open to the wonders which surround them, and which are within their reach both on the right hand and on the left. But as the bearing of such pursuits on the elucidation of Scripture is not, perhaps, so apparent as that of some other departments of knowledge, I shall, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, enter somewhat more into detail.

Let us examine some of our common flowers: let us take, for instance, the one which is the firstling of the year,—the Snowdrop. Its drooping head, and its snowy blossom, make it seem peculiarly delicate and fragile;

—————"Coldly pure and pale,
Like weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale."

It comes forth amid the storms of winter, and yet looks as if the first breath of the rising gale would destroy it for ever. But this is not the fact; its apparent weakness

constitutes, in reality, its strength; from its seeming fragility, arises its power of resistance. The head droops, the three outer leaves of the blossom—to use the ordinary and popular terms—overhang the other portion of the flower, and, like a penthouse, fling off every drop of rain. The stalk, by which the blossom is attached to the stem, is so extremely slight, that it does not impede its turning with every change of wind. From whatever point, therefore, the gale blows, the flower presents its back to the blast, and, thus protected alike from wind and rain, it lives unhurt in the midst of all the inclemencies of winter.

But the snowdrop is here known only as a garden flower. Let us turn to some of those which are everywhere common. Let us, for example, take the “wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,” which spangles our meads and pastures. Many are the poets who have paid to it their homage; none more gracefully than Montgomery:—

“ ’Tis Flora’s page; in every place,
In every season, fresh and fair,
It opens with perennial grace,
And blossoms everywhere.

On waste, and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise;
The rose has but a summer’s reign,
The daisy never dies.”

Those who have all their lives been looking at this flower, but who have never examined it with the discriminating eye of the botanist, may perhaps be surprised to hear, that it is not the simple thing for which they take it; that it is not, in fact, one flower, but a numerous assemblage of flowers growing together, and enclosed in one common flower-cup or calyx. Every one of the minute roundish yellow parts which form the centre of the daisy, is, to all intents and purposes, a distinct flower, and produces its own distinct and separate seed. Every one of the flat, white, “crimson-tipped” portions, which give to the daisy its star-like aspect, is also a distinct flower. Is not this fact strange in itself? But more strange are the beneficent contrivances, by which the safety of this humble plant is secured. Its white rays fold closely over the yellow disc at night, and also during rain, and thus serve as a protection to the precious pollen, on

which the fertilization of the plant depends. This is in itself a beautiful provision for plants which grow in humid and uncertain climates. When once the important object for which this precaution is needful has been attained, the petals lose sensitiveness, and close no longer. A new provision now comes into operation. The seeds are formed; but that they may not be endangered during the process of ripening, the calyx or flower-cup contracts, shields them from the weather until they are fully matured, then expands, and, bending downwards on the stalk, facilitates their escape.

Let us take up another common flower: let us take one which is common everywhere, even by our dusty waysides,—the despised Dandelion. It resembles the daisy, in being an assemblage of distinct florets, and in the precautions, different, but not less effectual, for the safety of the unripened seeds. But when the seeds are ripe, we behold a singular and beautiful apparatus employed for their dispersion: a winged appendage has been supplied to each. From every seed springs a stalk or shaft, surmounted by a star of down of the most delicate texture: a breath, as every child knows, is sufficient for their dispersion; and carried along by the winds of heaven, the seed is scattered abroad over the earth.

If, by the communication of these and similar facts, which each can verify for himself, we can bring the young to look with admiration, not only on the beauty of flowers, but on the skill and wisdom manifested in their structure, we enable them more justly to appreciate the passage, "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow," and so far we aid in the elucidation of a text of Scripture.

If, leaving the vegetable kingdom, we turn our attention to the insect tribes, we shall find they are no less fraught with lessons of instruction. The Butterfly, in its singular transformations, seems typical of the condition of man, crawling for a time upon the earth, consigned to the repose of the tomb, and rising into a more glorious and blissful state of existence thereafter. The Bee and the Ant, in their populous communities, offer to us most interesting examples of combined and regulated labours. Each individual fills its own proper place, and performs its allotted duties. With what care are the young attended to, and provided for! With what industry are

the labours for the welfare of the community carried on! Let us make known to our more advanced pupils the history of these insect nations; let us reveal to them the policy and laws by which they are regulated; and when those things have been fully explained and clearly understood, bid them, in the words of Solomon, "Go to the ant, consider her ways, and be wise."

If we now ascend beyond the contemplation of the vegetable and the insect tribes, we shall find the feathered inhabitants of the air, bearing on their wings evidence, no less striking, of almighty goodness and superintendent care. Our meadows, at the present time, resound with the cheerful and ever-welcome note of the Cuckoo. Our eyes are gladdened by the graceful evolutions of "that guest of summer," who converts the projecting eaves of our houses into her "coigne of vantage," and there fixes "her pendent nest and procreant cradle." With what solicitude does each of these birds provide for the safety of her future young, and attain that object by means not only different, but most widely dissimilar! We hail the arrival of these and other birds, as spring-time visitants, and harbingers of brighter skies. A few weeks since, and they were inhabitants of countries far removed from our own, and of climates widely different from ours. They have come, impelled by that mysterious impulse which, we, in our ignorance, term "instinct." The call of the wild swan, as, high in the air, he pursues his vigorous flight, is another example of the same instinctive power, exerted at a different season, and in a contrary direction. A few familiar examples of this migratory power, give new force and beauty to the words of the Poet,—

"Who bids the stork, Columbus-like, explore
Heavens not his own, and worlds unknown before?
Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?"

And when the subject has become familiarized to the minds of our pupils, and the guidance of the All-wise is revealed throughout, they will receive, with an understanding heart, the truth of the passage. "The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming."

If, turning from the earth and the air, we now seek to explore the waters, we shall there find that examples of almighty power and of infinite goodness, are no less abundant. The examples which I shall mention belong not to tropical nor to antarctic seas; they are drawn from creatures which may be found within our own bay. There is, over many of our rocks, a coating of small conical-shaped shells. But the little creature by which each is inhabited, was not always as now the inmate of a fixed abode. In his early life, he swam freely about, and was gifted with ample powers of vision. At a certain period he fixed himself to the rock to which he now adheres; his shelly covering was secreted; the eyes, no longer wanted, were obliterated; and the little animal, which at one time was free and natatory, became, for the remainder of his life, fixed and immoveable. We naturally ask, What can be the object of so strange a procedure? It was the dissemination of the young. Had they been clustered permanently around the parent shell, the spot they occupied would, in a few generations, have become unfit for their support. By being diffused through the waters of the sea, during the early stages of their existence, the individuals are scattered, and the species is preserved.

On hearing so strange a tale, we are ready to exclaim, "How wonderful! surely by no other method could the end have been so well attained!" But we would be wrong. Under the guidance of OMNIPOTENCE, a similar result is accomplished by an entire reversal of this arrangement. There is another marine creature which begins life with the appearance of a sea-weed, or zoophyte, fixed to one spot, and furnished with a jointed stalk, surmounted by a few radiating fibres. Its size increases, until a period arrives, when the ray-like head becomes detached, and, gifted with new powers, swims actively about, a diminutive, but free and perfectly formed animal,—gifted, as it approaches maturity, with every power, requisite for the preservation of the individual, and for the continuance of the species.

When the mind has been brought to ponder on subjects such as these; when it has been led to trace, in air, and earth, and sea, the skill and goodness of the Creator, the heart is prepared for uttering, in a sincere and fervent spirit, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom

hast thou ~~made~~ them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things ~~creeping~~ innumerable, both small and great beasts."

I advocate the teaching of the several subjects, to which I have now adverted—

Because I regard such knowledge as good in itself;

Because it throws light on many passages of Scripture; and

Because it has a tendency to render devotional feelings habitual.

The motion is so worded as not to pledge the association to any specific course. It expresses, in general terms, approval of the suggestion, that classes for the more advanced pupils should be established; and it directs the Committee for the ensuing year to enter into correspondence on the subject with the ministers and superintendents of our several schools. From their replies, we shall, I trust, be enabled to form an opinion of the extent, to which the proposed recommendation admits, at the present time, of being carried into actual operation, and thus to separate the good that is within our reach, from that which is as yet unattainable. I beg, Sir, to propose—

"That, for the advantage of the older children in our Sunday Schools, it is highly desirable that classes should be formed, in which information, of a kind suited to their more advanced age, should be imparted on subjects pertaining to the illustration of the Scriptures; and that the Committee for the ensuing year be requested to communicate with the ministers and superintendents of the Schools connected with this Association, as to the best means of effecting so important an object."

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE PURE IN HEART.—MATT. v. 8.

The pure in heart, with pure delight
Shall see their God in vision bright:
As Adam saw before his fall,
All things in God, and God in all.

The pure in heart shall see their God,
Or when he lifts the chastening rod,
Or makes his blessings round them glow;
Like sunbeams on the mountain snow.

The false in heart, no God can find
Except the idol of the mind;
Whose word is dark, whose work is worse,
And man, the creature of a curse.

In vain our Lord his truth imparts,
And pours his light on evil hearts;
The lurid cloud with lightning gleams,
And evil hearts have evil dreams.

Let Joseph's dungeon-walls attest,
How much the pure in heart are blest;
The lion's den, where Daniel slept;
The lonely grove, where Jesus wept!

Within that temple's holy place,
Our God bestows his gifts of grace.
The mercy's seat—the power of prayer—
The soul's enraptured hour, is there!

Behold the place of Faith unfeigned,
The robe of Purity unstained!
The Hope that lights the hour of death,
Nor leaves us with our parting breath!

The Zeal that wakes before the day,
To seek the place where Jesus lay:
The humble Gratitude that waits,
With thanks, at Mercy's open gates!

The Charity that draws the veil
Of kindness over brethren frail;
Or lifts the wounded traveller's head,
And cheers his fainting soul with bread!

The Joy that flashed on Mary's gloom,
When Lazarus burst the dreary tomb;
The Love that makes all Nature bright,
And guides the soul in God's own light!

Then keep thy heart, my son, with care;
The judge and witness both are there!
And in that temple's sacred bound
The issues pure of life are found!

ST. DILLON,

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

WHY does the law require that any one be put to death? All laws should be, and professedly are, for the benefit of society; and, consequently, the punishment which these laws provide should have that great object in view. Capital Punishment in no way contributes to this end. Its victim it cannot benefit. It hurries him to eternity before he has time to make that improvement which his character required, and which punishment contemplated effecting. Professedly the correcter of evil and vice, and the promoter of virtuous improvement, in reality it closes up the fountains of amendment which it was intended to open; it extinguishes, as far as it has power, the feeble sparks of a godly reformation, which it should have raised into a flame. With one fell stroke it cuts down, in the very bud, those resolutions, which, if life had been spared, would one day have shot forth, and bloomed, and brought forth the fruit of holiness and godly living.

It is vain to reply, that the severity of the measure is justified by the salutary effects which its occurrence produces on others. Those best acquainted with human nature are of opinion that the very contrary is the fact. Observation may convince any one that, instead of crime increasing, it has diminished with the decrease of public executions. But even if such summary punishment had a beneficial effect on others, are we to do evil that good may ensue? Are we to adopt the dangerous maxim, that the end will justify the means?

It might be very easily shown that a safer, and more useful mode of punishing vile offenders could be found, than that which consists in taking away the life. For example, — solitary confinement. The lonesome cell the criminal will regard as less desirable than even the cold grave. And while, as a punishment, it loses little, if any, of the severity, it possesses many recommendations which the other does not. His labour will more than pay for his support; while the surplus will be gained to the public store. He will have an opportunity of repenting and amending. He may be advantageously taught many important lessons, and especially to be pious and godly; and thereby prepared to occupy and enjoy a place in a much higher mansion in bliss, than it could reasonably be

expected he could have been fitted to occupy, had he been cut off by the hand of the executioner.

But from whom do law-makers receive the authority to take away the life of a brother man? God is the giver of life, and none but he should take it away. In his hands, alone, are the issues of life and death; and who should venture to take them out of his hands? I grant, as already stated, it is necessary that the violators of the laws on which society is based, and the authors of its disorders, should be punished, both for their own improvement, and for the public safety; but maintain, that wise and good legislators will adopt only such measures as will tend to promote these objects. Life they will regard sacred. It is the gift of God to every man, which none has a right to take away except he who gave it.

These observations have been suggested by the melancholy announcements which the newspapers daily contain of persons atoning for their offences with their lives. One can scarcely lift a paper, without having his blood frozen in his veins by the account of some black murder legally committed by the hand of the executioner. And this in a Christian country! Friends of humanity and religion, of every sect and party, unite your efforts and labour, until you obliterate, from the face of the statute-book, the law which requires "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Judaism is abolished; and if we are not, we should be Christians. "Go ye and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

April, 1844.

W. W. W.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

THE BOY WHO TOLD A LIE.

The mother looked pale, and her face was sad,
She seemed to have nothing to make her glad;
She silently sat with tears in her eye,
For her dear little boy had told a lie.
He was a pleasant, affectionate child,
His ways were winning, his temper was mild;
There was joy and love in his soft blue eye,
But oh! this sweet boy had told a lie!

He stood by the window alone within,
 And he felt that his soul was stained with sin;
 And his mother could hear him sit and cry,
 Because he had told her that wicked lie.

Then he came and leaned by his mother's side,
 And asked for a kiss which she denied;
 And he told her with many a penitent sigh,
 That he never would tell another lie.

Then she took his small hand within her own,
 And bade him before her kneel gently down;
 And she kissed his cheek while he looked on high,
 And prayed to be pardoned for telling a lie.

INTELLIGENCE.

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. JOHN K. MONTGOMERY.

IN resigning his charge as Superintendent of the Sunday School in connexion with the Second Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, on Sunday, 28th April last, Mr. Montgomery delivered a short, but appropriate address to the children in attendance; briefly pointing out the motives which should induce them to attend the Sabbath School, and the great lesson which they should there learn; as well as the important duties for which these are designed to prepare them, both as respects God and their fellow-creatures through time and eternity. Besides their duties to their parents, their employers, and others with whom they are connected in the world, he dwelt at some length on the importance of *speaking truth*—at all times and in all cases;—of avoiding every approach to profane swearing and taking the name of God in vain;—of strictly observing the Sabbath day, and keeping it holy;—of remembering “their Creator in the days of their youth;” and learning, whilst they are young, when they have more time and opportunities than in after life:—these, amongst other useful lessons of religious truth, were strongly urged upon the attention of the children. The necessity of being regular and punctual in their attendance at school, and orderly when there, as well as the duty of obedience to their teachers, was endeavoured to be impressed upon their minds; for that, without these, they could not derive the benefit they ought, from their instructors; nor could the prosperity and discipline of the school be secured. In concluding, Mr. M. stated his regret at leaving, not only the school, but the children, to whom, from long superintendence over them, and constant anxiety to promote their good, he had really become attached,

and in whose future welfare he was deeply interested; and concluded by expressing a hope, that they would always be as attentive to the wishes and directions of his successors, as they had been to his own.

At the close of his address, which was listened to by the children with great attention, Mr. Montgomery was presented by the teachers with an elegant copy of Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Scriptures, in six imperial octavo volumes, accompanied by a suitable address.

Each of the volumes contained the following inscription: —

PRESENTED TO THE
REV. JOHN K. MONTGOMERY,

BY THE

REV. JOHN PORTER,

AND THE

TEACHERS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN CONNEXION WITH THE
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION, BELFAST,

On resigning the office of Superintendent,

As a tribute of their esteem and regard, and to record their opinion of the Zeal,
Industry, and Perseverance, with which he laboured in the dissemination of
Scriptural knowledge amongst the Poor;

And also his marked efficiency in the discharge of the
Duties of his Office.

TEACHERS' SOCIAL UNION, BOSTON, N. E.

This Association met at the Pitts-street chapel vestry on Monday evening, Feb. 19th. Rev. Mr. Waterston being absent in the early part of the evening, Mr. Cobb, the superintendent of the Pitts-street School, was called to the chair. The services were commenced with prayer by Rev. Mr. Thomas, late of Concord, N.H. After the reading of records and the call of the roll, the following question was discussed:—Has the Sunday School accomplished the object for which it was instituted? if not, what remains to be accomplished? Rev. Mr. Sargent observed, that if Sunday Schools had *accomplished* the work for which they were instituted, there would be no necessity for their being continued in existence any longer. He regarded the fact that they continue to exist as satisfactory proof that they have not accomplished the end for which they were established. He supposed it to be the object of Sunday Schools, to afford religious instruction to those children, who, from any cause, were cut off from such privileges.

The latter clause of the question opened so wide a field that he hardly knew where to begin. Rev. Mr. Thomas stated that he rose because others did not. He regarded the Sunday-school teachers as co-workers with the Saviour. The Sunday-school

teacher is to break the bread of life to those under his instruction. There are multitudes of children, said he, who are not religious. How should the teacher approach his work? He should borrow from heaven that spirit and those principles which he would impart to a famishing world. The Sunday School was one branch of the means in use to recall souls which had strayed from duty, and its object can never be fully accomplished so long as human beings have to pass through a life of trials and temptations. Mr. G. W. F. Mellen remarked that the question before the meeting naturally led us to consider what had been the effects of Sunday Schools thus far. He proceeded to mention as among the good effects of Sunday Schools, that they had put an end to the warlike sports and sectional rivalries and jealousies among boys. Until Sunday Schools were established, there seems to have been no idea of eradicating any of the great social evils from society; but since their establishment, important moral reforms have been undertaken and carried on.

Mr. Bayley thought very little had yet been done by Sunday Schools. He said there were old people as well as children in the community who needed to be included under Sunday-school instruction. It was as important to save the souls of the aged as of the young. He had seen in one instance in particular a religious congregation who, after the regular church services closed, resolved themselves almost unanimously into a Sunday School. Both the old and the young belonged to that school, and that, he thought, was as it should be. In his view preaching and Sunday Schools will not have finished their work till every soul that has sinned has been reclaimed. Mr. N. A. Barrett thought the question seemed to call for the facts of Sunday-school history, and requested Mr. Pray, who had large experience in Sunday Schools, and who had critically observed their operation and effects, to enlighten the meeting by giving out some of the facts of the case. Teachers he thought were not impressed with a proper sense of the tremendous responsibility resting upon them. He had sometimes been ready to ask if they had not followed too closely the example of Rakes, i.e. if they had not attended too much to intellectual culture.— There was need at the present day, as there was in the days of John the Baptist, that people should be exhorted to *repent*. He was led to imagine sometimes whether Sunday-school teachers themselves had been baptised into the true spirit of Christ in all its length, and breadth, and depth. He regarded the fact that children are so early withdrawn from our Sunday Schools, as conclusive evidence that the instruction there received does not produce such effects as we could wish to see.

Mr. Pray spoke of the practice, common not many years since, of having the clergy once a quarter or once a year, to instruct and question the lambs of their flock in the catechism, &c. Such as this had been the system of religious culture for the young prior to the establishment of Sunday Schools. Sunday Schools were instituted, he observed, to take the place of such forms of instruc-

tion as these; and they had triumphantly accomplished this object. They had supplied a course of religious instruction for the young far better than that for which they were substituted. In reply to a remark of Mr. Bayley, he observed, that if a plan were devised to afford better religious culture to adults than they at present enjoyed, he would heartily aid in it—but he did not wish to divert the Sunday School from its appropriate purpose, which was to afford religious culture to the *young*.

Mr. Geo. G. Channing remarked that he thought many persons judged of the prosperity of Sunday Schools by the number attending them, rather than by the inward principle of piety. It was not enough that children be neatly prepared, and orderly arranged, and kept out of harm's way for an hour or two on each Sabbath. He wished to see more seriousness in teachers and in superintendents. He never yet had seen a school which appeared to be impressed with such solemnity, nor had he heard the prayer of a teacher which indicated such fervency as answered to his ideas of what a Sunday School and its teachers should be. Persons, said he, should not undertake to be Sunday-school teachers, unless they have leisure to perform the duties of the office, and can bring all their best powers to the work. He feared that teachers underestimated their pupil's powers of comprehension. Children should not be looked upon as *dwarfs*. Their ears are open, their attention is quick, and in his opinion they have more enlarged understandings than their teachers generally suppose.

Rev. R. C. Waterston next addressed the meeting. He seemed to speak with more particular reference to what had been said by the gentleman immediately preceding him, and with a view to remove any feelings of discouragement which Mr. C.'s remarks might have occasioned. Mr. W. was willing to admit that Sunday-school teachers were none of them perfect, and that a greater earnestness, and a higher degree of spirituality, in Sunday Schools, was desirable. Still, he was not disposed to disparage either the teachers or the schools. He believed that among Sunday-school teachers, there are as large a proportion as among ministers, who are earnest, faithful, true-hearted, and devoted. He did not speak of any one denomination, but of all. There might be, and doubtless were, faithful Christians in all. Among teachers of our own denomination, perhaps, there was less of cant and less condemnation of amusements, than among those of other sects; but he was not at all disposed, on this account, to disparage our own teachers, or our own schools. Sunday Schools might be better, but they are doing much. Their teachers, continued Mr. W. cannot be too devoted followers of Christ. When Mr. W. had concluded his remarks the dismissal hymn was then sung; after which a benediction, pronounced by Rev. Mr. Waterston, closed the services of the occasion.

The *form* of the question seemed not to meet with favour; but the topics intended to be embraced in it were important, and elicited a spirited, interesting, and useful discussion.

THE ENGLISH ADDRESS ON AMERICAN SLAVERY.

We perceive, by a late number of the *Boston Register*, that a meeting of Unitarian ministers, numbering about fifty, was held in that city on Feb. 29, for the purpose of considering whether any, and if any, what reply should be made to the recently received address from one hundred and eighty-five Unitarian ministers of Great Britain and Ireland, on the subject of Slavery. A resolution was passed with but one dissenting voice, that it is expedient that an answer be prepared to the letter recently addressed to the Unitarian clergy of this country by a portion of the Unitarian clergy of Great Britain, and a Committee was accordingly appointed to prepare a reply. At an adjourned meeting, held on April 11th, a reply was submitted, which, with a few amendments, was adopted; and a Committee of three was appointed, with instructions to have a sufficient number of copies of the answer printed; to forward a copy to every Unitarian clergyman in the United States, so far as known, with the request to each that he will return it to the Committee with his name subscribed, if he think proper, as soon as convenient; when a reasonable time shall have elapsed, to provide for the engrossing of the letter on parchment, with the names of the several signers appended; and to forward it to such destination in Great Britain as the Committee may think proper; and to take any other steps which in their judgment are needful.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE LONDON DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY.

The anniversary of this excellent institution, being the first of the kind established in England, was kept on Wednesday, 24th April, 1844. At 11 o'clock in the forenoon, divine service was performed in Dr. Hutton's Chapel, Little Carter-lane, Doctors'-commons; and a very appropriate sermon was preached on behalf of the society, by the Rev. H. H. Piper, of Banbury, from Zech. iii. 2—4. After the service, the chair for business was taken by Richard Taylor, Esq. F.S.A.

The treasurer, W. Wansey, Esq. explained the state of the society's finances, which, on the whole, are flourishing, there being a greater number of annual subscribers than there were last year; and the treasurer holds in his hands several hundred pounds towards the erection of a new building, as soon as an eligible spot of ground can be found for establishing a new mission station.

The secretary, the Rev. E. Tagart, then read the committee's report of the proceedings of the society and its missionaries during the past year, and which contained some very interesting and affecting details,—“the short and simple annals of the poor.” The report was adopted and ordered to be printed. The officers for the ensuing year were then appointed; thanks were voted to the missionaries, and to the Rev. E. Tagart, who, on account of other

engagements, was obliged to retire from the secretaryship; and several interesting speeches were delivered by the gentlemen who moved and seconded the various resolutions. Several handsome donations were announced in the course of the day, and there was a good collection at the close of the proceedings. In the evening the missionaries, officers, and teachers, were invited to tea by the secretary elect; and they assembled accordingly, to the number of between forty and fifty, in the Mission Chapel, Half-Moon Alley.—After tea the chair was taken by the treasurer, W. Wansey, Esq.; and the proceedings were animated and interesting.

On the following evening (25th), a public meeting was held in the same place, to consult upon the best means of promoting the mission cause in that neighbourhood. The chair was taken by Dr. Bateman; and the meeting was addressed by Revds. R. K. Philp and W. Vidler, the missionaries, and by Messrs. Wright, Cochrane, and Ainger.

On the evening of Monday, 6th May, the Spicer-street Mutual Instruction Society, which is in connexion with the London Domestic Mission Society, held its anniversary in the Mission Chapel in Spicer-street, which was tastefully arranged for the occasion. At half-past five o'clock between fifty and sixty members and friends sat down to tea. At seven o'clock the public were admitted, and the chair was taken by Dr. Bateman, secretary of the London Domestic Mission; and after the business had been introduced in the usual manner, Mr. Beedham, secretary of the Mutual Instruction Society, read an interesting report of the proceedings of that society, which is established for the improvement of its members, by means of lectures, discussions, Scripture readings, and a circulating library. The following sentiments, embodying the leading principles on which the society is conducted, were then successively introduced and discussed, to the evident delight of the assembly:—

1st. "Religion; may its purity be restored, its power felt, and its precepts faithfully acted upon!"

This sentiment was introduced by singing the hymn, "'Tis religion that can give," &c.; after which, the Rev. J. O. Squier delivered one of his fervid and impressive appeals on behalf of the religion of which he is a valued minister. He was followed by the Rev. W. Vidler, Domestic Missionary, and Mr. Ainger, who respectively urged upon the members the necessity of personal piety.

2d. "Science; may its objects be appreciated, its truths diffused, and its discoveries beneficially applied."

This sentiment was introduced by the singing of part of Addison's beautiful Hymn on the Creation; after which C. Clarkson, Esq. addressed the meeting, pointing out the sources of enjoyment arising from a cultivated mind; and exhorting the members to persevere in their plans of improvement. Mr. Mason spoke upon the same subject, especially pointing out the harmony between nature

and science, and illustrating his statement by reference to familiar examples within the reach of all.

3d. "Freedom; may its claims be acknowledged, its obstacles removed, and its blessings universally enjoyed!"

This sentiment was introduced by the children singing Mr. W. E. Hickson's song, "The Might with the Right," which we are glad to find is becoming national; and which, when sung to the fine air of Calcott, as set in the "Singing Master," is calculated, as one of the speakers observed, to move all, except "that man who hath no music in himself:"—

"May ev'ry year but draw more near
The time when strife shall cease,
And truth and love all hearts shall move,
To live in joy and peace.
Now sorrow reigns, and earth complains;
For folly still her power maintains;
But the day shall yet appear,
When the might with the right and the truth shall be,
And come what may, to stand in the way,
That day the world shall see.

"Let good men ne'er of truth despair,
Though humble efforts fail;
Oh give not o'er, until once more
The righteous cause prevail!
In vain, and long, enduring wrong,
The weak may strive against the strong,
But the day shall yet appear,
When the might with the right and the truth shall be,
And come what may, to stand in the way,
That day the world shall see.

"Though interest pleads, that noble deeds
The world will not regard;
To noble minds, that duty binds,
No sacrifice is hard.
The brave and true may seem but few,
But hope has better things in view;
And the day will yet appear,
When the might with the right and the truth shall be,
And come what may, to stand in the way,
That day the world shall see.

Mr. Washington Wilkes then addressed the meeting upon Freedom, in a strain of great eloquence and earnestness; and he was ably seconded by Mr. Moore.

Thanks having been voted to the chairman, the business was concluded with an address by the Rev. R. K. Philp, the senior Domestic Missionary.

NORTHERN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

The fifth annual meeting of this Association was held in the School-house of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, on the evening of May 2d. David Lindsay, Esq. J.P. presided. The

attendance was numerous and respectable; and several ministers from a distance were present. When the meeting had been opened with the usual devotional exercises, the chairman called on the secretary to read the Report of the Committee for the past year; This report, with the resolutions that were passed, will be found appended to the present number of the *Bible Christian*. Several interesting and useful addresses were delivered in the course of the evening; two of which—that by Mr. Haliday on the value of Sunday Schools, and that by Mr. B. Patterson on an extended course of instruction in the Sunday School—we have published at considerable length; conceiving that they are well calculated to foster and direct the growing interest that is felt by our denomination in Sunday-school instruction. We trust that this useful association will continue to increase in public estimation; and not only accomplish the purpose for which, in the first instance, it was formed—of supplying requisites to the schools—but also be the means of diffusing information respecting the management of the Sunday School, and thus increase its value and efficiency. To this latter object the labours of the committee were last year much directed; and we were gratified to find that they received the cordial approval of the General Meeting.

At the close of the proceedings, Mr. Lindsay was moved from the chair, and Mr. Haliday called thereto; when the thanks of the meeting were voted to the former gentleman for his kindness in presiding, and for the uniform interest he evinces in the religious education of the young.

DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL.

This Bill has at length been brought down to the House of Commons. Its successful progress through the Upper House has been very gratifying to the friends of religious liberty; as it must have been mortifying to those who meditated a *legal* spoliation of their neighbours' property. In some isolated case, there may have been a show of reason in the claims which they put forward for property held by non-subscribing Presbyterians; but so far as we know,—and in all the cases with which we are acquainted, they had no shadow of claim, but that which an unrepealed, persecuting statute gave them—a claim which any man, calling himself a Presbyterian, should blush to prefer. It is strange to hear our brethren of the General Assembly declaring, that *Prelacy is the enemy of Civil and Religious Liberty*, while Presbyterians are, in their violent opposition to this Bill, insulting the first principles of Freedom. It is strange to hear them object to a Bill which only goes to secure to Unitarians, property which was theirs by common consent and lengthened possession, and which had only been rendered doubtful by the revival of a dormant statute; while they are themselves seeking a Marriage Bill, to secure to them privileges which were theirs by common consent and lengthened usage; and which were only disturbed by the revival of a similar statute.

How slow these gentlemen are to understand, or at least to practise, the simple rule, of doing as they would be done by! Notwithstanding all the opposition which it is encountering, we trust and believe that the Bill will pass — Sir Robert Peel, we trust, will be found in this case the “least squeezable” of statesmen; — that it will protect our non-subscribing brethren in the houses of worship which they have received from their fathers; — and that it will rescue from the grasp of cruel bigotry those properties in Dublin which had already been assailed by the creatures of the General Assembly.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

NEWRY SUNDAY SCHOOL.—Mr. Wm. Connor, who has for some time been Secretary and Assistant-Superintendent of this school, has been presented by the teachers, on his departure to London, with a copy of Kitto's Illustrated Commentary, as a testimony to the esteem in which he is held, and to the efficiency with which he has discharged the duties of the above offices. All who have seen the quiet regularity with which Mr. Connor went about his work, know that this mark of respect is well deserved.

BIOGRAPHIES OF WORCESTER, CHANNING, AND WARE.—The late Dr. Ware, it is known, had made considerable progress in preparing a Memoir of Dr. Noah Worcester, the author of “Bible News,” and “The Apostle of Peace.” After Dr. Ware's death the unfinished work was put into the hands of one of Dr. Worcester's family, by whom it has been completed, and will soon be published. —Materials are accumulating for the Memoir of Rev. Dr. Channing, which will be prepared by one bearing his name, and competent to do justice to the high theme with which Providence has entrusted him. It will be many months, however, before the work will be ready for the press.—A Memoir of Rev. Henry Ware, jun. D.D. is in course of preparation by one fully competent to the sacred office he has undertaken. Some time must elapse before it can be given to the public. We trust it will be found that selections may be made from the papers left by Dr. Ware, to furnish a volume of unpublished matter from his pen.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our friend. M——n, will perceive that he has been anticipated by another Correspondent, whose article appears in our present number. We cannot, however, understand the regret and indignation that have been expressed at our publishing Dr. Dewey's sentiments on American slavery, without the addition of such critiques as have been supplied to us. Dr. Dewey is an ornament to our Church—would that we had many such as he to plead the cause of freedom and humanity!—and we are not to excommunicate him because he does not see his way so clearly on the question of Slavery as we in Europe, any more, than we are to excommunicate a man who, educated amid the prevailing habits of society, does not see it his duty to sign the pledge of John Edgar or Father Matthew. Allowance must be made for the circumstances in which minds are educated; and they are rather to be encouraged to do more, than abused for what they have done. Dr. Dewey has done something towards the emancipation of the slave. And we pray that he and others may labour on, and more boldly, till America shall rejoice in COMPLETE and UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. VII.

JULY, 1844.

VOL. VI.

THE DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL.

THE glorious majority of ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY in favour of the second reading of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and the more glorious debate—if debate that can be called, where argument was all on the one side,—have put to flight the fearful apprehensions that filled many minds, and dissipated the clouds that had gathered of late so thick around our little Zion. Never, we believe, was a more desperate and united effort made to crush a small and unpopular church. And everything seemed to favour the cruel and heartless crusade on which our persecutors had embarked; a government of their own political creed, and a parliament of the same complexion—added to the mighty influence of numbers, wealth, and popularity, seemed to strengthen the power which the revival of penal statutes gave them to accomplish their object, and to cut off from the persecuted the hope of protection from the spirit of the British constitution. With characteristic cunning, too, they raised the cry of “Thief” against those whom they meant to plunder, and thus drew away the attention of many from the baseness of their own conduct. Yet, honour be to a British ministry and a British parliament, the cause of honesty and truth has triumphed over all party considerations—the pressure from without, violent and clamorous as it was, from Londonderry to the Land's End, availed nothing, to influence Sir Robert Peel: he carefully examined our case; he was satisfied the prosecutions which had been carried on, or threatened against our ancestral property, were not based on any violation of trust, but sprung from the alleged heresy of our opinions; and he declared that “so deeply was he convinced of the justice of the Bill which he had introduced for our pro-

tection, that he and his colleagues were prepared to make every other consideration subordinate to the duty under which they felt themselves placed to support it." We remember Dr. Cooke once boasting that Sir Robert was one of the least *squeezable* of statesmen, and certainly he has proved himself in this case to be so; for never were greater efforts made to squeeze a minister into the path of partial and oppressive legislation. Intolerance sounded its tocsin, and in formidable array were mustered the hosts of Methodists, Presbyterians, and Independents; but all in vain—the government had resolved to maintain the cause of justice and religious freedom, and nobly have they carried out a noble and generous resolution. Many have bestowed praise on the present premier for the emancipation which, in company with the hero of Waterloo, he accomplished in 1829, for a numerous body of our fellow-countrymen; but a strong necessity pressed on him then, and the choice seemed to be between reasonable concessions, and civil war. Here however no such urgency existed; he might have turned away from the simple but striking details which our indefatigable representatives laid before him, and he might have listened to the swagging boasts of political importance and *evangelical truth* with which our persecutors beset him; he would thus have been instrumental in doing injustice to a small section of the Christian church, driving us away from the houses where our fathers worshipped, and from the ground where the ashes of departed friends repose—"devouring widows' houses," and reducing aged and feeble ministers to "apostolic destitution"—but politically and socially he could thereby have sustained no inconvenience. He has, however, chosen the better course: he has acted in a manner worthy of the spirit of that constitution which he supports; and greater, infinitely greater lustre will be shed around his name by the disinterested support he has given to the Dissenters' Bill, than by the part, conspicuous though it was, which he had in removing the grievances to which our Catholic brethren were so long and so unjustly subjected.

The history and success of this Bill have done much for the cause of Religious Liberty; they have assured us that with our legislature at least, it is something more than a name—it is a blessed reality. We begin to feel

that a brighter day has dawned upon our country, and our heart is elated when we contrast the gloomy past—its penal statutes, and their rigorous enforcement—with the happy present, when, thank God, we are at length delivered even from the tender mercies of pious attorneys and Scotch relators. Contrast the scenes of persecution to which two centuries back or less, our church was exposed, with her present position. Compare the debate of the 6th of June, with discussions on kindred subjects in parliament fifty years ago, and we must feel that our country has made rapid progress in the right direction. Precious as is the triumphant majority in support of the Bill to those who are directly interested in it; more precious, we believe, is the manly and eloquent defence of religious freedom which accompanied it: conducted by some of the highest names not only in the legislature, but in the literature and eloquence of our country—by men of opposite parties, Whig and Tory, Catholic and Protestant—by men whose names are already history—it at once overwhelmed the feeble opposition which it encountered, and established the freedom of the British subject in matters of religion.

The tribute which was paid to religious liberty in parliament was certainly greater than that which the people offered; yet even among the people it was stronger than once we had reason to expect. The Protestant clergy, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, were, with a few honourable and most respectable exceptions, in favour of persecuting “the pestilent heresy;” the exceptions, however, were all Episcopalian. We believe that not a single minister of the General Assembly wrote his name in support of the Bill. A few we understand there were who were *neither for nor against*, but that is only a skulking apology for want of courage: those who are really opposed to persecuting a man for his opinions, will not withhold their name when it might aid in shielding him from persecution. We are told of *three* ministers of the Assembly, perhaps there were four, who privately expressed themselves in favour of the Bill;—modest men! “who do good by stealth, yet blush to find it fame!” and these are sometimes held up to us as the representatives of the flickering independence of the Assembly. Commend us to the independence that makes a man publish on the house top—if justice

requires it—that which he whispers in the ear: and save us especially from that chameleon independence which wears one complexion in Ulster, and another in London.

But the laity of the Protestant churches bore a good testimony, and we must cherish a lively gratitude towards the multitude of excellent men of every political party, who so generously petitioned in favour of freedom, and thus strengthened the hands of the government against the frantic yell which intolerance had raised. And to the Roman Catholic church, clergy and laity, we are largely indebted. Vividly impressed with the aid which liberal dissenters had given them in their struggles for emancipation, and trained to a love of religious freedom, from having felt the bitterness of religious bondage, they came forward spontaneously and unanimously—yes, to a man, if we except some serpent lurking about the office of the *Newry Examiner*, who raised a discordant hiss; but it was soon drowned in the hearty “monster” cry which our Catholic brethren raised in our behalf. While they have contributed to the triumph of our cause, they have taught us that religious liberty is prized by the Catholic as well as by the Protestant, and that they understand the practice, if not the theory, of its principles, more thoroughly than those celebrated orators, who in Exeter Hall and other arenas for theological strife, exercise their “prescriptive right” of abusing Popery and Papists.

In briefly reviewing the anxious contest which is now drawing to a happy termination, we would not omit to notice the aid which a Liberal Press afforded in correcting the many errors that existed, and giving the fullest information respecting our condition and claims, and the motives which spurred on our persecutors. In Ulster, it is our duty particularly to notice THE NORTHERN WHIG, which, from its commencement, has been identified with the cause of religious freedom; and which has laboured in this case with a discretion, ability, and zeal, which are above all praise. It has been often, and especially of late, alleged, by its enemies, and the enemies of that liberty which it so ably advocates, that it is the organ of our church. The *Whig* is not more opposed to being our organ than we would be to adopt it as such; but it has, in this instance, been the organ of humanity and justice; it has been forward to expose the plots of the persecutors;

to tear off the veil of orthodoxy, which concealed their plans of spoliation; and we believe that it has been mainly instrumental in correcting the errors which clerical bigotry had so industriously circulated in this province. Here, and, we believe, in other parts of Ireland, and in England, we have had the most influential portion of the press in our favour. In Belfast, the *Banner*, of course, opposed us perseveringly—we wish we could add truthfully; the *News-Letter*, urged by duty, or by interest, followed steadily in its wake; and we are told that, after a Petition against the Bill had been signed by the clergymen of the Established Church, the *Commercial Chronicle* made one feeble effort in the same direction with that marked impartiality of which it makes so *classical* a profession.

We confidently expect, that, before this number can be issued, the Bill will have passed through the remaining stages. Hitherto there has been much to stir up in the minds of our people painful feelings towards their Presbyterian brethren; they felt that those who once declared that “they would not touch a hair of their head,” wanted only the power, but lacked not the inclination, to expel from them their meeting-houses, and expose them to obloquy, contempt and loss. We are now beyond their reach; let us prove the power of our faith by the meekness of our deportment; exhibit that charity that “beareth all things;” and transfer to the support and extension of our religious principles, those labours and anxieties which have recently been given to the protection of our church property.

GOSPEL WOMEN.*

PART II.

WE learn from the Scriptures, that after our Lord's ascension, the women who were of the number of his disciples and were affectionate attendants on him while he dwelt among them, still continued with the apostles; and Mary the mother of Jesus, is mentioned by name. These were all sincere and true; but we turn to the fifth chapter of the Book of Acts, and there, alas! we find a pretender, one, who loved the name of disciple, but loved not th^e

* May we not be allowed to comprise under the title, “*Gospel Women*,” all those who, in the days of the apostles, were influenced by the spirit of the Gospel, or made profession of the faith?

self-sacrifice which gives it its value,—which makes it a *real thing*. This wretched woman, who agreed with her husband, as the apostle so powerfully expresses it, “to lie to the holy spirit,” was soon made to know how short is the triumph of the wicked. Whether Sapphira was the adviser of her husband on this occasion, or simply gave up her better principles to please him, is of little consequence, for the sin which we do not strenuously oppose, we may be fairly said to approve of. We know that the two were equally judged by the apostle, condemned to instant death, and no time for repentance given, to show that all who profess the faith of Christ with their tongue must have it in their hearts. They may not hold the truth in unrighteousness. “They cannot lie to the Holy Ghost.” They cannot love God and mammon. Now what does the conduct of Ananias and Sapphira mean, when rightly and literally interpreted, but this: that they supposed they might turn their worst side to the eye of God, while they thought it necessary to put their best face on before men? Is it not a marvel after so signal a defeat as this case affords, that cunning and self-deception should ever after have dared to appear in the church, and that covetousness should have taken such flourishing root there? Alas! like some noxious bindweed, this latter has twined its tendrils around much that was beautiful in the garden of the Lord.

We leave this melancholy subject, and the scene of judgment we have just been considering, to contemplate one of a very opposite description. Again, we find Peter proving his authority from Christ over death and the grave. We are forcibly reminded of that promise of our Lord: “Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” At one moment, the sinner, in health and vigour, bound by his word, yields up his life. At another, the saint, loosed from the grasp of death, stands up in renewed vigour before him. Tabitha or Dorcas was of this number. She was a woman, not like the last we spoke of, full of pretences and covetousness, but “full of good works and alms-deeds which she did.” The one plans and contrives for *self*, yet loses all—the other plans and labours for others, and while she has forgotten herself, she is remembered in death. See the

bereaved and lamenting poor who surround her bed. The afflicted widows behold with anguish the closed eyes and the powerless hands so lately employed in their service—and the lips that breathed consolation and love, all silent now. But lo! at the word of faith and power, her eyes open, her pulse beats, her lips move! Hope and joy beam from every eye. Simple was thy employment, O Dorcas! simple in thine own eyes, and simple in the eyes of the world. But to clothe and to console the poor; was accepted of God and approved of good men. Thou hast won for thyself lasting honour, thy name is attached to all societies that have this kind object in view, of supplying with clothing the helpless and the destitute; which societies, when attached to a Christian congregation or school, are found to do so much good, at a small expense of money and exertion. They are a means of making the rich acquainted with the wants of the poor; and often with their patient virtues also; and of binding friends together in sweet communion.

On the day when Cornelius assembled his family to receive the apostle and to hear from his lips the great revelation, we are not told whether the female part of his household was included—but we hope the “devout man” would not have debarred them of this privilege.

The mother and grandmother of Timothy are worthy of all reverence, having so fully trained their young charge in the knowledge of the Scriptures. They themselves being believers were able to prepare his mind for the honourable labours afterwards required of him, as a worker in the vineyard of the Lord. Paul, in his epistles to Timothy, amongst many other exhortations, points out to him what he should require of the women of his congregation, that they should be silent and modest in their deportment, and simple in their attire.

Lydia of Thyatira deserves honourable mention among Gospel Women; she was a worshipper of the true God when Paul first met with her, and, like all who make diligent use of the light they have, she was favoured with further knowledge. She, having listened to the things spoken by Paul, and having her heart open to their importance, was baptized, and all her household. She showed a grateful and hospitable heart to her instructor, beseeching him, if he had judged her to be faithful, that he would, with his friends, abide at her house.

Of Priscilla, the wife of Aquila, frequent mention is made. She appears to have been a true companion to her husband, and fellow-labourer with him, both in their worldly occupations, and the more important concerns of eternal life. She, with her husband, earns the love and approbation of the apostle Paul, who calls them, "my helpers in Christ Jesus. She was truly a *Gospel woman*."

Philip, the Evangelist, we are told, had four daughters which did prophecy,—we are warranted in believing them to have been of the household of faith.

The apostle Paul, at the conclusion of some of his epistles, makes frequent and affectionate mention of women who were believers. Phebe, whom he declares to have been "a succourer of many and of himself also." Mary, who, he says, bestowed much labour upon them; the mother of Rufus, whom he calls, "his mother and mine." Among the persons who separated themselves from those who mocked, or those who procrastinated, after Paul's preaching at Athens, a certain woman is mentioned, named Damaris. We are told at Berea, "honourable women, which were Greeks, believed," and at Thessalonica, "of the chief women not a few."

We may not class under the head of Gospel Women Bernice or Drusilla. We leave the one to her "great pomp, which she doubtless valued far above the humiliation of the cross, and the other to her Jewish prejudices; and pass on our way till we meet with "the elect lady and her children," and the children of her "elect sister." The tender and holy apostle John addresses this "elect lady," and her relatives with the profoundest reverence and affection. He tells her that not alone he "loves her in the truth," but that she "is loved of all who love the truth," he rejoices in the advancing holiness of her family. He exhorts her to hold fast the commandment of Christian love, to beware of deceivers, and to remember that "he who abideth in the doctrines (or teachings) of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Query—Did the apostle forget to tell her of the bitter penalties that wait for those who receive not a tri-une God? Perhaps her mind was too weak to receive it: no,—the apostle declares he loved her "in the truth," and seems very particular that the truth should be apparent to her. Yet not a word of this doctrine, nor of any of those, said to be so essential, yet truly so inexplicable. If they be so essential, this apostle,

who loved the "elect lady" in the truth, assuredly would have urged them. But he is satisfied in reminding her of Christian love, warning her against deceivers, and commending to her the teachings of Christ. So then the apostle leaves us to conclude that love is more necessary to the vital growth of the soul, than the belief in Trinitarianism, arbitrary election, or original depravity. We must either receive this conclusion, or presume that the truthful apostle, who "loved in the truth," hid the truth from his convert, and called her "elect," or chosen, whom he believed to be a cast-away.

Now, concerning *all* these Gospel Women, either in this selection we have just made, or the former; we do not find them instructed in these doctrines. Though some of them had the happiness of attending on the instructions of the blessed Jesus himself, and others on those of his most favoured apostles. We see, then, that of whatever use these mysterious doctrines may be, to puzzle the minds of the learned, and to put angry polemics in a heat, they are quite useless to *women* professing godliness, who must be "ornamented with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Now, the apostle has laid this last injunction upon women, not only because it becomes them to be quiet, and in subjection, but also for this cause—that the calmness of their spirit is more particularly, and more continually tried; to them being committed the smaller cares of life, which, however trifling they may appear at a hasty glance, do yet so fully make up in number what they want in magnitude. And great indeed is woman's need of meekness, but it should be united with energy of mind and a true self-respect.

M. B.

SKETCH OF CHANNING AS A PREACHER.

[The following beautiful notice of the late Dr. Channing as a preacher and divine, is taken from a Discourse on his life and character, by Dr. Dewey, preached in the Church of the Messiah, New York, and published in the end of last year, but as yet, we believe, little known in this country.]

PREACHING was the chosen vocation of Channing's youth; it was the glory of his manhood; and only under the severe pressure of necessity did he relinquish this great

calling. It was always attended in him with extreme exhaustion. I well remember, as doubtless you do, one of the last occasions on which he addressed a religious assembly; it was in this pulpit. Three weeks after, I met him on an excursion in the western part of this State; and he had not then recovered from the effort. Justly did he conclude that he ought to give up a function that was wearing so fatally upon his physical strength. This effect on him, resulted from the character of his mind and sensibility, and from the idea he entertained of this great ministration. He did not think that a good sermon was a simple exhortation; that it was a bare repetition, however fervent, of truisms and common-places; that it was enough to say to the people, "be good." He did not mistake, as some seem to do, the aged John's traditional saying in the assembly, "dear children, love one another," when he was too feeble to say anything else; he did not mistake that for preaching. He did not listen to those who said, "Labour not the matter so much; the Gospel is a simple thing," forgetting that it is a deep thing, too. No, to preach, was to speak to a nature clothed with the awfulness of unmeasured capacities and unspeakable exposures; to penetrate its depths; to awaken its slumbering powers; to reason with its errors; to unveil its disguises; to convince it not only of its sin, but of its sanctity; to make the man feel that he was too great a being for the littleness and paltriness of vice, too great for the world to have, and use, and wear out; and to bring at length this erring, and wrestling, and suffering nature to prostrate itself before the cross of the all-perfect, suffering, and redeeming One, there to find peace, strength, and help divine.

This, I think I may say, though feebly stated, was his idea of preaching. And thus thinking of this great function, he felt that there was no power of any mind, however lofty, that it did not bring into urgent requisition. Preaching never seemed to him for an instant, the discharge of a mere professional duty, the fulfilment of a formal task. It was the great action of his life. It was the greatest action that could be demanded of any life. He felt that never Demosthenes nor Cicero, that never Burke nor Chatham, had a greater work to do, than he had on every Sunday. He poured into this office his

whole mind and heart. The preparation for it was a work of consecrated genius; it was as if, every week, he had made poem or oration. No wonder that he often sunk under it.

And then he brought to this task, thus highly conceived of, a very peculiar nature; a nature at once singularly rational and fervent, scrutinizing and imaginative, strong and self-restrained. The working of such a mind is far more laborious than that of a one-sided intellect. Often have I witnessed the patience and anxiety of his meditation, to say nothing but what was true, just, and wise. He would never lend himself to the popular and taking forms of pulpit display, wherewith either to alarm, or overawe, or astonish, or charm the hearer. He never attempted any graphic representation of heaven or hell, of the last Judgment, or of the sinner's peril; though no preacher, perhaps, had ever at command the stores of a richer imagination. But all was sober in his administration of religion. To utter the truth, the naked truth, was his highest aim and ambition. The effect, he was willing to leave with God and with the heart of the hearer. He never seemed to labour so much to enforce truth, as to utter it; but this kind of utterance, this swelling and almost bursting of the inmost heart to express itself, was the most powerful enforcement. There was always, however, a chastening and restraining hand laid upon the strong nature within; and this manner has led some, I believe, to deny to Channing the gift of the highest eloquence. I know not what they call eloquence; but this restrained emotion always seems to me, I must say, one of its most touching demonstrations; and surely that which reaches the heart, and unlocks the fountains of tears, is its very essence; and that which penetrates to the still depths of the conscience, that lie beneath tears, is its very awfulness and grandeur. Such was the eloquence of Channing. I shall never forget the effect upon me, of the first sermon I ever heard from him. Shall I confess, too, that, holding then a faith somewhat different from his, I listened to him with a certain degree of distrust and prejudice? These barriers, however, soon gave way; and such was the effect of the simple and heart-touching truths and tones which fell from his lips, that it would have been a relief to me to have bowed my head

and to have wept without restraint throughout the whole service. And yet I did not weep; for there was something in that impression too solemn and deep for tears. I claim perfection for nothing human; and perhaps, my idea of this kind of communication, goes beyond anything I have ever heard. No words ever realized it, but those calm and solemn words of Jesus Christ, at which the heart stands still to listen; and which it is wonderful that anybody dares ever to dilute into prolix comments. But certainly no preaching that I have heard, has come so near, in this respect, to the model in my mind—I say not irreverently the great model—as the preaching of Channing. And I should not omit to mention another trait in his religious sensibility, that imparted to its manifestations a peculiar interest. And this trait seems to me so marked and unusual, as to be worthy of a moment's comment. In most men's religious feeling, I believe, there is something singularly general and vague. Their emotions revolve about this sacred theme rather than penetrate into it; and though it is bedewed with their tears, only the more do their thoughts glide about the surface. They weep; but they do not think; they do not meditate their religion deeply in their hearts. And thus their discourse has a general truth, without any discriminating pertinence; their words taken together have a meaning, but there is not a meaning in every word; there is no inward prompting to make them use the words they do use, rather than some other words of the same general import. The pen that writes them is not dipped in the heart. In short, you know that there is not any such reality in most men's religion, as is felt and seen in the sentiments that attach them to home, to kindred, to all the palpable interests of this life. But it was not so with the remarkable and venerated person of whom I speak. His thoughts on this theme, the deep and living verities of his own experience, had an original impress, a marked individuality, a heartfelt truth and a singular power to penetrate the heart. His words had a strange and heart-stirring vitality. Some living power within, seemed to preside over the selection and tone of every word, and to give it more than the force and weight of a whole discourse from other men. Many have I known, so to feel this touching influence, not only in the church,

but by the fireside and in the friendly circle, that they could scarcely restrain their feelings within the bounds of domestic and social decorum.

I must observe further and more specifically, concerning his preaching, that its constant aim was to discriminate the true spiritual excellence from everything false, imperfect, sectarian, and technical. Precisely as every great sculptor or painter labours to set forth the true beauty and grandeur, in opposition to false tastes and false schools of art that prevail around it; this did Channing as a preacher. If you examine the great sermons of all ages, I think you will find none of them so marked with this trait as his. With him, correction always went hand in hand with enforcement. This tendency to innovation and reform, has indeed always distinguished the American pulpit; as in the sermons of Edwards, Bellamy, and Dwight. To show the disinterestedness of virtue, for instance, was always a favourite task with that school of Divinity known as the Hopkinsian school. And I have heard our friend more than once express his strong sympathy on this point, with the Hopkinsian theology. But with him, the work of reform was spread over the whole field of Christian virtues. Not the disinterestedness only of true goodness, but its absolute and universal superiority to everything else in man; its unrivalled majesty, its inexpressible beauty—in what a singular and original manner did he discourse upon these things! This was the aim that guided his pen and his speech—it was not a vain desire to praise his friends—in those beautiful discourses, among his last efforts in the pulpit, on the characters of Tuckerman and Follen. But the aim was always apparent from the first. From his youth, he ever strove to give birth to his own glowing idea of the true Christian man. He could not bear that a shallow morality, or a mere worldly decency, or a vulgar fanaticism, or any distorted peculiarity of any religious class, should usurp the honours of Christian virtue. Of this great achievement, virtue—the end to him, and the explanation of everything in humanity and in the human lot—his views were at once large and generous on the one hand, and on the other, strict and solemn. No preacher ever demanded a higher purity, ever set forth a loftier model; none ever addressed himself with a diviner faith and

courage to the sharp conflict with pain and disaster. And why? Because he saw that every stroke of calamity was designed to cut and chisel that model, that work of God, into truer perfection; because he felt that the finished work was worth all the cost of all human suffering and misfortune. But the Christian so formed by solemn endeavour and self-denial, and suffering if need be, he did not desire to see clothed with a stiff and cumbrous garb. He did not wish the good man to hold any strange or constrained relation to those around him. We saw a picture under his delineation, with vigour and beauty in every trait, but never overlaid with any false ornament — a picture inspiring awe and winning love, full of nobleness, and full of tenderness, clothed with strength, and breathing candour and gentleness; it was the loveliness of spiritual virtue; it was the loveliness of the Christ. And when the character of this exalted and perfect One was brought into controversy, his whole interest in the question concentrated itself upon one point; that the glorious model should not be marred. He was little concerned at the prevalence of dogmas, about God or Christ, or about human nature, however opposed to his own opinion, save as those dogmas, in his view, tended to distort or lower the great ideal of spiritual beauty.

I have now fallen on a topic which, in an account of the peculiar mission of Channing, demands some expansion. It is impossible, indeed, to regard him as a preacher, without considering him as the advocate, in this country, of a more liberal theology.

It is no ordinary task to stand up against the most cherished religious ideas of a whole people. It involves sacrifices and trials, which those only who have shared in the undertaking can understand. Who can doubt what position Channing might have held among our great religious sects, if he had stood among them and of them! It is one thing to be welcomed on every side; it is another thing to be on every hand repelled with horror.

The positions are sufficiently distinct even in the abstract statement; but no abstract statement can fairly convey the question which is presented for the mind's trial. There stands, on the one hand, an ancient, time-hallowed Church, Roman or English, Lutheran or Calvinistic; it embodies wealth, numbers, influence; it ranks

among its supporters, communities, and nations; it is strong in prescription, in custom, in usage; it bears long-accustomed honours in its name and fame; it is clothed with old and venerable associations; and many good and venerable men belong to it: the nobility, the piety, the goodly social array of the land, perhaps, is there; the chains that weave themselves around tender and susceptible hearts, draw to that communion; virtues that adorn society, names that win respect, shed their halo around it. How many influences unite to draw the mind thither! It is respectable to stand in that old, and wide, and rich heritage. It is safe. It is agreeable, it is grateful, to throw one's-self on the bosom of universal esteem and respect. It is painful, it is a bitter pain—like that of martyrdom—to fling one's-self upon the swords and spears of hostile opinion; to meet the wounding glances of all-surrounding distrust; to find one's very friends turning upon him the cold and forbidding eye of reproach and sorrow. Those who stand within the protected pale may smile at this representation; but it is because they know not what it is to stand without it.

Honour, then, to the men, who, like Luther, like Fox and Wesley, like Lindsey and Channing, have taken this noble stand—the stand for principle, for conscience, against all worldly ease and worldly respect. They have ranged themselves beneath the banner of Him “who was despised and rejected of men,” and of those noble Apostles of Reform, “whose names were cast out as evil.” Let those who, with similar convictions, have chosen a different part, take their comfort; their stalls and their livings, let them hold; their warm place in the embraces and smiles of society, let them hold: they can have no more; to other men than them, belongs the praise of courage and magnanimity, of God-fearing truth, of a conscience fearing none but God! This praise belongs to Channing: and the day is coming when, far and wide, it shall be rendered to him! In the darkest hour for his opinions, he stood up fearlessly for their defence: and the time has already come, when the heaviest burthen of the reproaches that fell upon him, is rolled away; when the cause he espoused stands before the country in unimpeachable honour.

I freely admit that Channing's especial vocation did

not lie in the field of sharp logical conflict. But there is one of his productions — I allude to the Ordination Sermon at Baltimore — of which I think I may say, without any extravagant eulogy, that there never came a more polished weapon from the armory of polemics. Never were more acute distinctions more admirably put, than those with which he set forth the true principles of Scriptural interpretation, nor more convincing statements offered, of the essential inconsistency of the popular theology, both with itself, and with sound reason and morality. On the Trinity, in particular, I am persuaded that difficulties were lodged in many minds by that Discourse, as there were in my own, from which that doctrine could never be relieved. At the same time, the Discourse was characterized by a simplicity and beauty of style, which at once brought it down to the humblest minds, and carried it up to the highest.

But the great vocation of Channing as a controversialist, was that upon which I have all along insisted ; it was to set forth the beauty of religion, to commend it to the highest nature, the most exalted reason, and the purest feeling, of his readers and hearers. It was most fortunate, I think, that the great leader in this controversy should have been the fervent worshipper of the loveliness of religion, rather than an abstruse metaphysician, or a barren critic. And certainly, to my thought, religion was never invested with such a charm in this country, as in the glowing page and speech of Channing. I remember one of his hearers and parishioners saying, many years ago, " Mr. Channing has a great idea of God ! " How remarkably true, and how significant was the observation, all who have listened to him must be sensible. His idea of " the Father " came nearer to that of the great Teacher, than that of any person I ever knew. And then the grandeur of the filial relation to Him, — the brotherhood of all men, and the glory of the spiritual man eclipsing all other glory, — what living themes were these in all his preaching and in all his writings ! I cannot doubt, and I have heard it admitted by those of other communions, that they have produced an effect upon the whole theology, preaching, and religion of the country. That these central ideas often occur, and indeed are constantly repeated, in his writings, is not only undoubtedly true, but it

is a peculiarity of which he was very well aware, and for which he had, as he conceived, a sufficient defence. It is so only, that the moral philosopher, the preacher of spiritual truth, can make an impression of himself upon the age in which he lives. Versatility should be the attribute of the dramatist, the essayist, the writer of fiction; but the strength, the significance of the Reformer, lies in concentration; the stamp of the Apostle, is unity.

SLAVERY AND ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION.

[On this subject we insert the two following letters out of respect for the writers. We published the article on Slavery, from Dr. Dewey's pen, because we believed that many of our readers would be interested in reading the sentiments of such a man, on such a subject. If, in doing so, we have communicated "bane," surely we shall now have afforded antidote enough to satisfy the qualms and scruples of the most fastidious. We are no more responsible for the opinions of Dr. Dewey on this subject, than we are for the spirit of his opponents. We are anxious for the complete and universal extinction of Slavery; it is a disgrace to the civilization and Christianity of the nineteenth century, and a foul blot upon the finest country in the world. Heartily did we approve of the earnest and affectionate appeal which was recently made by our church to the American brethren. And most heartily shall we rejoice, when the growing spirit of the Gospel shall have struck the fetters off the last slave; but we believe that that glorious consummation will not be hastened, but rather retarded, by the ridicule, abuse, and excommunication of those who labour for it less devotedly, or less thoroughly than ourselves. We owe it to Dr. Dewey to state, that twenty-five years ago — long before any Abolition Society was heard of — he was a member of a private association of gentlemen, formed for the investigation of the subject of Slavery in their country. "Often and often," says the Doctor, "we have known the matter to be discussed, as the most fatal evil and peril of the country; discussed at the North with solemn deliberation, and at the South with anxieties and tears even, which should have won a consideration far different from this coarse and ferocious abuse." The proffered explanations of our Correspondent, M——n, in support of his "strong suspicion"

wilful dishonesty" on the part of Dr. Dewey, we beg to decline: against this charitable suspicion, our readers will place the writings, character, and life of Dewey, and let it go for what it is worth.]

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

DEAR SIR,

"There is a LAW above all the enactments of *human codes* — the same throughout the world — the same in all places; such as it was before the daring genius of Columbus pierced the night of ages, and opened to *one* world the sources of power, wealth, and knowledge, to *another* all-unutterable woe — such as it is at this day: it is the law written by the finger of God on the heart of man; and by that law, unchangeable, and eternal — while men despise fraud, and loathe rapine, and hate blood — they shall reject with indignation the *wild and guilty phantasy, that man can hold property in man.*" — HENRY BROUGHAM in 1830.

THE above beautiful sentiment comes home to the heart, and settles there as a truth of God, by no sophistry to be displaced. It accords with a saying of Jefferson's, to the following effect (I cannot quote the exact words): — "I tremble for my country, when I think of the slavery she nourishes, and when I reflect that God is just; for there is not one attribute of His that is not opposed to the practice of holding men in bondage." These expressions had their origin in that divine precept which commands us in this wise: "Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you even so to them." It must be a source of pleasure to very many of your readers, to see that the Unitarian mind is alive on the subject of slavery. I rejoice at this indication of the existence of vital Christianity amongst us. It is a happy omen of our future usefulness in the world. May we keep the lamp alive, and ever abundantly supplied from God's own pure fountain of charity and love! May we strive more and more to make men practical, and not merely professed Christians!

When I read an account of Doctor Dewey's Lecture on "*American Morals and Manners,*" it seemed to me as one of the most gratuitous insults to the improving Christian feelings of our day, that I had ever read. I have not seen the entire lecture, but extracts from it, given in a New York paper, which speaks of it as "*one of the most udicious, convincing, and practical discourses we have*

ever heard." Thus it is that pro-slavery sentiment avails itself of the assistance of a Unitarian minister, who, almost immediately on his return home, after a visit to England, where he had, no doubt, been made sensibly to feel the unhappy position he occupies as the advocate of slavery in the present day, volunteers his support of the vilest system of slavery on earth. He extenuates it, therefore he supports it. The man who is not opposed,—whole heart and soul opposed,—to that system which chattelizes human beings, ranks among those who support a practice to which "every attribute of God is opposed." Dr. Dewey condemns slavery as a system, yet he defends it as a practice; he brings forward the oft-refuted assertions of general kindness to the slaves, as a palliation of it; he is not afraid or ashamed to bring in that hateful prejudice against colour, which is neither more nor less than a wicked condemnation of God, because he did not make all men white; and, in defiance of justice, and, I believe, in opposition to truth, he alludes to the physical and moral condition of the free blacks in America, as a proof that the race are not fit for freedom, for he says, "They are more poorly fed and clothed, and *in every respect* less happy and comfortable than their brethren at the south." He has been ably answered on these points by a highly intelligent coloured physician (whom, I understand, he refused to meet for discussion on the subject of his reckless statements), Doctor M'Cune Smith, who proves, by statistical returns, that the free blacks are in no degree, or in no respect, inferior, as a class, to their white fellow-citizens. In a most untrue, and therefore unjustifiable manner, Dr. Dewey attempts to fix on American abolitionists the imputation of wishing to carry their views by violence and force. The Doctor well knows that such is not their object; he is well aware that peaceful and Christian means alone are advocated by them; and these are making them so peaceful, that it is weak and foolish for such men as Dr. Dewey to come forward, and attempt to arrest the current of that righteous public opinion, which is fast accumulating, and will soon sweep the abominable system off the fair face of America. For my part, I am truly ashamed of Dr. Dewey; I am sorry he is a Unitarian and a minister; I regret that he has given added force to the statements of Mr. James G. Birney (a man well known in America, and not one of the *so-called*

ultra abolitionists), who, long since, proved, in a well-written pamphlet, that "The American churches are the bulwarks of Slavery there." I am indeed truly sorry that Unitarianism, which ought to be but another name for pure Christianity, has been degraded in the person of Dr. Dewey; but I am glad to find Irish Unitarians eager to come forward to wash out the stain he has put on our pure faith. Mr. Antisell's letter, in your last number, is a proof of this; and I find another correspondent has also written you on the same subject. One purpose I had in view when I took up my pen, which has carried me on, almost involuntarily, into other subjects, was, to dissent from your statement that "Dr. Dewey is an ornament to our Church." I hope he will yet be so; but that he is so now, I do not think. I have heard of him as a man of cultivated mind, and of high endowments: so much the worse for himself; and so much the more ought we to condemn him, he being a member of our body, if he prostitutes his talents in support of an unholy cause. The man who is not wholly with us in condemnation of slavery, is against us: the means of doing away with the wickedness may be a subject of argument, but the utter sinfulness of stealing a man, and making him an article of merchandize, admits of no discussion; it is abhorrent to our nature; it could not be practised by a Christian. We might as well argue as to whether our Heavenly Father was a benevolent being or a demon, as to argue whether a man might lawfully sell his brother. Let us, my dear Sir, maintain a high principle in this, and in all other matters; let us make no compromise with slavery or its excusers: by so acting, the truth will be with us, and our words will burn into the hearts of our opponents; they will fester in their consciences, and demand the only remedy which can heal the wound; which is, the immediate and unconditional emancipation of those who are held in bondage. When Dr. Dewey makes this a necessary item in "American Morals and Manners," let us extend to him the right hand of fellowship; let us then claim him as "an ornament to our church;" but while he gives the influence of his talents and his high intellectual powers in support or extenuation of that system which is "the sum of all human villanies;" let Irish Unitarians rebuke him faithfully. Heap up all other human crimes together, at one side, and place slavery against them: it wil

equal them in enormity, for it creates them all; the history of the slave-states in America, proves this; it is a record of unbridled lust and violence—of adultery and murder; female virtue and honour are held at nought; the rifle and the bowie-knife are the ready instruments of the white man's passion; they are his arguments even in the legislative halls of his country:—how, then, can an honest man,—much less a Christian man,—support such a system? It is impossible; he can have but one course to pursue, and that is, to denounce it unsparingly. The abolitionists of America are accused of violence and intemperance in their advocacy of freedom, but they only tell the truth; and that always hurts the wrong-doer, no matter in what language it may be conveyed: witness the treatment of the mild and amiable Dr. Follen; his spirit was gentle and kind, yet he had to fly from his native land, and he was persecuted in the country of his adoption.

Your allusion to Temperance and Tee-totalism does not seem to me an apt illustration of your case, inasmuch as it is hardly fair to place Intemperance and Slavery in the same category. Good men (unhappily it is true) still argue in favour of what they call moderate drinking: there is not a good man on earth, who will not condemn even moderate slavery; who will not say it is wrong to steal and sell one man as well as one thousand men. The wickedness of the one is evident; the criminality of the other is not admitted by all. I hope the time is fast approaching, when all good men will consider alcohol a poison alike to body and mind; and the use of it utterly opposed to the peace and happiness of mankind.

There can be no question as to slavery, for it is indeed a "wild and guilty phantasy" for man to imagine he can justly "hold property in man." Let us fix this great truth firmly in our minds, and then I believe we shall not think men who oppose it "an ornament" to the church of Christ. I would not willingly wound Dr. Dewey; but let him take a bold and manly stand against slavery, as many others in his country have done, and I shall be among the first to hail him as a friend and brother.

Yours sincerely,

JAMES HAUGHTON.

34, Eccles-street, Dublin,
June 5, 1844.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—When I read your extract from Dr. Dewey, in favour of Slavery, anticipating the replies which it could not but elicit, I was under some apprehension, that they might be objected to, as too obvious and self-evident to be required. The Doctor's statements are, substantially, fallacies that have been exposed and refuted a thousand times; and little originality could be expected in the answers. The complacency, however, with which he deals out strong assertions, and weak, oft-refuted arguments, in favour of the selfish and unprincipled system of Slavery; the self-sufficiency with which he utters his detractions of such men as Dickens, for condemning Slavery; the humiliation which one feels, at being supposed weak enough to be imposed upon by such *reasoning*; and the reluctance which it is impossible not to entertain, in circulating the *Bible Christian*, to give currency to sentiments so unworthy;—render it a difficult matter to remain silent.

But it seems that you object to criticisms on the Doctor's production, not because they are trite, or because he attempts to defend oppression; but because "he is an ornament to our church." I must protest, however, against the notion, that, because a man is called "an ornament to our church," his fallacies, on the side of oppression, are to be screened from exposure. And if he have written things that are humane and pious, would it not be better to publish *them*, than a piece of oratory, which, after a few soft sentences against slavery, that either mean nothing, or are in direct opposition to the remainder, consists of assertions and arguments not remarkable for any great power, but detestable in their objects. If we must go on the ground of authority, we can take Dr. Channing, to whom nobody will presume to equal Dr. Dewey, whose advocacy is in favour of the oppressed, and whose statements will bear sifting. Opposition to Dr. D.'s oration you are pleased to call "excommunication." If there must be "excommunication," I would certainly rather direct it against Dr. Dewey than Dr. Channing, against slavery than against freedom.

You certainly offer one apology for Dr. D.: that he may not see his way so clearly as others. If this be the case, he ought not to be set forth as a guide; nor objec-

tions made when we exclaim against his attempt to lead us astray. He himself, however, does not come with the air of a man conscious of his own want of clear sight. He speaks of those who do see clearly, and distinctly point out the horrors of Slavery, with as much confidence as if he were perfectly right.

I cannot admit the analogy of the subject of "Temperance," with that of Slavery. Temperance is a virtue which, like some others, consists in a mean between two extremes. So we should avoid both obstinate stubbornness and over-complaisance; too much severity towards the young, and excessive indulgence. In such cases, there may be a pretty wide field for difference of opinion. Sometimes the danger on the one hand is so very slight, and on the other so tremendous, that many good men are of opinion, that it is best to go to the safe extreme; while others think such excess of caution unnecessary. In matters of this kind, men may fairly differ. But with regard to Slavery, the case is different. It is like truth and falsehood, theft and honesty; and those duties which admit only of being observed or violated. We must go either to the right hand or the left. On the question of Slavery, unless we yield to a criminal indifference, we must either serve God or mammon. There is no middle course. There may be a difference in the means to be employed, and the ardour with which we may pursue our object; but in taking one side, we either adopt that of the sober Channing, and the humane Dickens, or that of Dr. Dewey, who rails at Dickens, and opposes Channing.

Your wish that we had many like Dr. D. and your admiration of his sentiments, I certainly did not expect. I can easily understand your tenderness as to one touching his cobweb arguments; for they will not bear much handling. But on one point, I should gladly hear your explanations; and if you give me room, I shall state my reasons in detail, for questioning how any man of decent acquirements and average understanding, can seriously offer such reasonings. My charity is as hard tasked to allow that he is sincere, in believing his own statements and views, as to believe that the platform objections against the Irish system of National Education arise from real and sincere scruples. Dr. Dewey's advocacy excites, in my mind, a very strong suspicion of *wilful dis-*

honesty, which I would gladly explain at length; and which, if you can remove, you will give me much satisfaction.

M——N.

L——, near M——, June 11th, 1844.

A PLAIN LETTER ON AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

To Mr. ——— ———

DEAR SIR,—As you have desired, I send you a brief notice of the doctrines which distinguish us from our Christian brethren. I think you will find it correct; but I hope that your inquiring mind will only make it an introduction to a more full and satisfactory investigation of the important points on which we differ from others, and for which we are so often condemned, ridiculed, and calumniated.

The chief subject on which we differ from all Roman Catholics, and all other Protestants, is respecting the Deity; others maintaining that God exists in Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, called the Trinity; while Unitarians believe that God exists in but One Person, and that Person the Father, according to the teaching of the apostle Paul (1 Cor. viii. 6). Hence we are called Unitarians—others Trinitarians. The great argument on which we rest our faith on this point is, that God is uniformly represented in Scripture as one Being, one Mind, one Person (See Deut. vi. 4; Matt. xix. 17; John xvii. 3); and that it is nowhere said that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, nor is the word Trinity to be found from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. In one text (1 John v. 7), it is said that they are one, as Jesus and his disciples are said (John xvii. 21) to be one; that is, *united* for the salvation of the world: but it is nowhere said that they are one God; and this text is the only one that has even the appearance of teaching such a doctrine.

The next point of difference between the Unitarian and the Trinitarian, is, respecting our Lord Jesus Christ; we believing that he is only the Son of God, they arguing that he is God himself.

In proof of our opinion that Jesus is not God himself, we refer to the prophecies of the Old Testament, which

predicted his coming; and there we see him foretold as the messenger of God, and not as God (Deut. xviii. 15, 16). We refer to the testimony of God himself at the baptism of Jesus (Matt. iii. 17), where he pronounces him to be not God, but the Son—the well-beloved Son of God: we refer to the testimony of Jesus, where he says again and again that his Father sent him, and anointed him; that his Father gave him the words which he spake; that his Father empowered him to work the miracles he performed: we refer to the fact, that Jesus prayed to God, did the will of God, and committed his spirit to God, when expiring on the cross: we refer to the fact that Jesus died; and that before he was taken up into heaven, he said to a disciple, “I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.” (Consult the following texts:—John vii. 29, 33; xii. 49; xi. 41; xiv. 24, 31; Luke xxii. 41, &c.; xxiii. 46; John xx. 17). We argue, then, that the Being sent, anointed, given, is not the same as the Being by whom he was sent, anointed, and given; that the Being who prayed, is not the same as the Being to whom he prayed; and that the Being who died, is not the eternal, self-existing God: for the mind shrinks from the thought of God, the Spirit of the universe, dying. In proof, also, that Jesus is not God, but the Son of God, we refer to the sermons, or rather summaries of sermons, preached by the apostles, and preserved for our instruction in the Book of Acts. In not one of these sermons is Jesus represented as God; and if he were God, and such a belief respecting him were necessary to salvation, and without it, as the Athanasian creed says, we shall perish everlastingly, is it likely that the apostles would have cushioned it and concealed it? In short, the whole tenour of Scripture seems, to my mind, to be against the doctrine of Christ's Deity; though it teaches us that he is next to God,—the highest and holiest Being of whom we know—higher than angels, more exalted than archangels, and placed at the right hand of the Father.

There are texts of Scripture that seem to teach that our Saviour is God himself; but if you examine them with care, you will generally, I might say always, find some collateral texts which explain their true meaning.

Unitarians also differ from most of their Trinitarian

brethren respecting the nature of man; Trinitarians thinking, that, by the transgression of Adam, all human beings born into this world are under the wrath and curse of God, and that even the feeble and helpless infant is sinful: while we believe that the infant is not sinful, for Christ says, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and that no man will be answerable for any sins but his own,—“every man must give account of *himself* to God” (Rom. xiv. 12). And we also contend, that, to suppose that God would punish us for a sin committed by Adam six thousand years ago, would be contrary to all our ideas of the justice and love of our heavenly Father.

The only remaining point is that of the Atonement, or making at-one with God. All agree that man, having sinned, requires an atonement or reconciliation with God; but the Trinitarian commonly believes that this atonement is made by Christ, and that God, before angry, becomes reconciled to man by the death of his Son. The Unitarian, on the other hand, believes that it is not God that needs to be reconciled to man, but man that needs to be reconciled to God; as the apostle says, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. v. 19).

From this hasty sketch you will be able to form some idea of the leading doctrines on which we differ from others; but you should employ some of your leisure hours in examining more particularly into them; and for this purpose, the best book to read is the Word of God. Trinitarians commonly accuse us of denying and degrading Christ; but this they do, because they are ignorant of our views.

Never forget, however, my dear friend, that, no matter how correct and scriptural our opinions are, we cannot be accepted of God, unless our life and heart be influenced by the life, doctrine, and spirit of our Redeemer.

Yours affectionately,

POETRY.

THE EUCHARIST.

We adore thee, God and Father,
 For the glorious liberty:
 We obey the calling, — “Gather
 Now my people unto me!”
 Let the joyful invitation
 Fly, like day, from east to west;
 Be thy name, by every nation,
 And to endless ages, blest!
 At thy table, Lord, assembling,
 What poor offerings do we bring! —
 Panting, — glowing, — sighing, — trembling,
 As alternate feelings spring:
 God! if thy transcendant greatness
 Sink us low in fear and shame;
 Yet, *Our Father!* what a sweetness
 Charms in that endearing name!
 As in solemn congregation
 We attend upon thy house,
 For the sweet commemoration,
 And renewal of our vows;
 Let thy favour, with us resting,
 Consecrate the bread and wine;
 May we, of thy goodness tasting,
 All be filled with love divine!
 Jesus gave the sacred token
 Of his passion, wine and bread,
 Symbols of his body broken,
 And his blood for sinners shed.
 To the rite we come, confessing
 Free redemption, grace unbought; —
 His be every name of blessing,
 For his love, surpassing thought!
 For the agony he suffered,
 Kneeling, at Gethsemane;
 For the sacrifice he offered,
 Crucified, on Calvary;

For the accents of affection
 Uttered with his dying breath;
 For his glorious resurrection,
 Conqueror of sin and death!

Blessed Jesus! with what fervour
 Shall we take thee to our hearts!
 Thou,—when tempted, our preserver;
 Thou,—our stay when life departs!
 Lamb of God! whose body, bleeding
 On the cross, our sorrows bore;
 Thou, in heaven, art interceding
 For us sinners, evermore.

God of peace and consolation!
 Love ineffable! that gave
 Precious gifts for our salvation;
 God our Father! hear and save!
 Draw us to the rock of healing,
 Whence the living waters flow;
 Pour thy spirit forth, revealing
 All our wishes thirst to know!

May thy counsels, King of glory!—
 Grateful awe and rapture move,
 As we meditate the story
 Of the Saviour's dying love:
 Hear us, Lord, of thee entreating
 Strength to walk in Jesu's ways:
 God of light! shine on our meeting;
 God of grace, accept our praise!

From Sunday-School Rhymes, &c.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

HONEYCOMB.

BEEs sometimes in the winter eat up every bit of honey, and leave the waxen comb clean and white. Did you ever see such honeycomb? To-day I have been looking at some, and I will tell you about it. But what I say will be too hard, I am afraid, for little children to understand.

The cells in a honeycomb are six-sided and very regular. Now three, or four, or six-sided cells would, either

of them, fit nicely together. But six-sided ones are much the strongest and best. Do the bees know this? Why, then, do they make them six-sided? There are two sets of cells in a honeycomb, and the bottoms of one set are against the bottoms of the other. But the floor of each cell is over part of these cells in the other set, and is thus strengthened by three partition walls beneath it. Did the bees think of this? Why, then, do they build them so?

The floor of each cell is not flat, but is made of three flat pieces, and so the bottom of the cell runs to a point. Now if this point were either sharper than it is, or blunter, it would take more wax to build the cell. Perhaps you ask me how I know. How do you think I know? It was calculated by a Scotch mathematician, but it is so hard a question, that I don't believe there are twelve men in the United States that could sit down and calculate just how blunt the point should be, so as to use least wax. Yet the bees make the cells just right. Do bees understand more mathematics than some professors of mathematics in colleges?

Children, God makes the bee, and teaches her to work. Mathematicians may be wise, but God is wiser than all men. The insect, taught by Him, makes the wisest wonder at her work.

From the Child's Friend.

INTELLIGENCE.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION SOCIETY, BELFAST.

IN presenting the first annual Report, your Committee is happy to have to congratulate the Society upon the success which has attended its past proceedings, and to venture the expression of sanguine hopes for its future usefulness.

The pleasure your Committee feels in drawing up a report so favourable, is heightened by the fact, that some friends whose opinions are much valued, had strong doubts of the usefulness of such a society; nay, some even feared that its establishment would be *prejudicial* to the interests of the body to which the members are attached, as well as injurious to true religious feeling in the individuals themselves.

Notwithstanding these fears and discouragements, the originators of the society were anxious to try the experiment. They were the more induced to do so, as they felt that such institutions were the *natural and spontaneous growth* of worshipping societies, united

upon the grand principles of the Reformation—the true *Protestant* doctrines—the right of individual judgment in matters of religion, and the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith—rejecting all human creeds and formularies—asserting no control over individual opinion—claiming no infallibility either as individuals, or as bodies, nay, condemning the very idea of infallibility, either Protestant or Catholic—submitting solely to the author and the finisher of the Christian faith—having faith in *human progress and improvability*—availing themselves alike of the discoveries of science, and the daily increasing light thrown upon the Scriptures by Laymen and Divines—aiming at *consistency*, and endeavouring by every means to prove that Christianity is a *reasonable*, a *spiritual* service, a rational and exalted attainment, worthy the highest and most noble efforts of which human beings are capable.

To members, your Committee has little to communicate, as the various meetings were so *regularly* and so *well* attended, that nearly every one is acquainted with its proceedings; but to friends, and especially to those at a distance, it may be at once interesting and satisfactory to be informed of the Society's plans.

A Secretary and Committee of Five (partly Ladies and partly Gentlemen) manage the limited affairs of the Society.

The meetings are held twice a month (on the *first* and *third* Mondays), from October till April.

Essays or papers, original or selected, are read by Members, and conversation ensues founded on the paper submitted.

The reader (volunteering) and the subject are stated at the meeting previous to that on which it is submitted.

The Meetings are opened by a short appropriate prayer, and closed by psalmody.

Diffidence in submitting a paper is avoided, by requesting the Secretary or another to read it, in which case, the member's name need not be mentioned.

All remarks are made in a conversational manner (although for the sake of order and regularity, a chairman is appointed), *not in set speeches*—members having the privilege of retaining their seats.

By these arrangements, every approach to a *debating society* is effectually prevented; conversational powers are developed or improved; dogmatism is not tolerated, whilst courtesy and a respectful consideration for the opinions of others is acquired and cherished.

During the past session, the following subjects have been submitted to the Society:—

A Sermon on the Influence of Practice on Belief, by Buckminster.

A Letter on the Ministry at Large, by Dr. Tuckerman.

An Essay on the Spirit of Christianity.

An Essay on the Causes of Sectarian Antipathies.

A Sermon on the Religion of Life, by Dr. Dewey.

A Paper on the Doctrine of the Trinity, historically considered.

A Review by T. B. Macauley, on the History of the Popes.

A Sermon by Archdeacon Paley, on the Influence of the Holy Spirit.

A Paper on Divine Influence, extracted from the "Christian Examiner."

A Sermon by Dr. Blair, on Extremes in Religious and Moral Conduct.

The conversations which followed the reading of the various papers, were felt to be interesting and improving; and they were characterized throughout by that courtesy and toleration, which is so strongly enjoined by the faith we profess. During the whole session, not one jarring or discordant tone was heard.

It was felt that by these meetings, doubts were resolved; opinions corrected or modified; information communicated; vague ideas on several important subjects have given place to more perfect, and more consistent views; and the prevailing opinions of the body to which we are attached, were explained to some and strengthened, in others.

Indeed, the *most sanguine anticipations* of the friends and promoters of the Society have been realized, and your Committee in common with every individual member, look forward to the renewal of these meetings next session, with pleasing expectancy.

In conclusion, your Committee, convinced of the usefulness of such meetings, cheered by the success which has attended their institution, and certified of the *pleasure* and *profit* derived from them, would earnestly recommend the subject to the consideration of all friends of rational religion; and fervently hope, that wherever our views are held, one or more of these societies may spring up in the ensuing winter.

J. R. NEILL, *Secretary*.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, the 29th of May, the Anniversary of this Society was held. The religious service was held in Essex-street Chapel, London. The Rev. Wm. Gaskell, of Manchester, preached from the words of St. Paul (2 Cor. iii. 17): "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The object of the discourse was to show the pernicious consequences of the belief that Salvation depends upon believing a particular creed. It was an able and eloquent address, and seemed to be heard with deep interest. At the close of the service, Thomas Gibson, Esq. was called to the chair, and the annual general meeting of the Association was held, when resolutions were passed, declaring their approval of the efforts of the committee in arranging a series of lectures in the past year, and thanks to the ministers who delivered them; commending the justice and liberality of her majesty's government in introducing the Dissenters' Chapels Bill; deprecating the opposition which the bill had encountered on the part of ministers and members of the Established Church and Dissenting bodies; and expressing their high satisfaction at the friendly relations with the Irish Non-subscribing Presbyterians, which their common danger had produced. In supporting these resolutions, the Chairman and the movers and seconders offered many valuable observations. At the close of the

meeting, most of those present adjourned to the Crown and Anchor Tavern, where a late breakfast was prepared, and where a company of about three hundred assembled.—ABRAHAM CLARKE, Esq. of Newport, Isle of Wight, took the chair.

Appropriate sentiments were spoken to by Dr. Bowring, Messrs. Hornby, Teeld, and R. Taylor, Revds. Dr. Hutton, E. Taggart, W. Gaskell, W. Hincks,—— Madge, J. Porter, and G. Armstrong. We regret that our limited space will not admit of our giving even an outline of the speeches delivered on this interesting occasion.

Dr. BOWRING, alluding to the prominence which Unitarianism had received in the discussion of the Dissenters' bill, thus spoke:—"But the discussion of this question could not but prove of great benefit to Unitarianism. So far from shrinking from inquiry, the great disadvantage of Unitarianism had been, that it had not been able properly to force the discussion of its tenets upon the public eye and ear. Its doctrines were, however, now about to be brought forth into the broad daylight, and it was a privilege for them to think that they had nothing to fear from examination. Unitarianism had always produced its quota—aye, more than its quota—of great and good men. But the question was not one between Unitarians and Trinitarians as such, it was a question of civil rights, of equity and justice, of the due administration of trusts, and had nothing to fear from examination or cross examination, from their enemies looking around, about and within them, and he could not doubt that they should have soon to congratulate each other upon a new triumph of civil and religious liberty."

Mr. GASKELL thus happily exposed the inconsistency of many Protestants:—"Protestants called upon them to judge for themselves. They did so; and then they were condemned for doing it. They were told that the Scriptures were sufficient for salvation. They put themselves under their guidance, and immediately a cry was raised that they were rushing upon their own destruction. They were told to call no man master but Christ, and that by him they must stand or fall. They placed themselves at his feet, and lo! at once, another party stepped between them and him, and began to lord it over them and to stigmatize them as heretics and blasphemers. And why was all this?—simply because they ventured to differ from other Protestants in points which the latter chose to call essentials. So that according to them, after all, 'Search for yourselves' meant, 'Look through our eyes, and say what we bid you say,'—the 'Bible and the Bible only' meant the 'Bible, with a few of our interlinear interpretations,' and 'Christ the only master' meant 'Christ under correction from us.' Could they conceive a more miserable, pitiful, paltry playing with a great principle than this. He could understand a Catholic coming to them and saying, 'You have no right to judge for yourself; there are those who are appointed to do it for you, and it is sinful in you to presume to interfere with them;' but he could not understand how a Protestant could come and talk of the right and privilege, nay, the duty of judging for

himself, and searching the scriptures for himself, and then, because he happened to differ from that Protestant, how the latter could say that he was no Christian, that he had fallen into a damnable heresy, and that he was fit only for the companionship of evil spirits, and for dwelling in everlasting woe. This he could not understand, unless indeed as a mockery and an insult, as signifying that he was to be treated as a babe in intellect, as one who had never revered the injunction of the apostle, in understanding to be a man."

Dr. HUTTON, in speaking to a sentiment relating to the Irish deputation, and expressing a desire for increased intercourse with Irish Unitarians, remarked, that "when the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was at first thought of, their Irish friends were willing to be separated from themselves in the matter, lest the continued union of the two interests might operate prejudicially towards the English Unitarians. It was thought that the latter would be more certain of success separated from their Irish friends, but he was glad to say that this separation had not been effected, that they were now all embarked in the same boat to sink or swim together, but he hoped and trusted that, by setting all hands to the oar, they would all get safely into harbour together."

LONDON SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

The tenth annual meeting and public breakfast of this Association was held on Thursday, May 30th, at Radley's Hotel, Bridge-street, Blackfriars. One hundred and twenty-two persons sat down to breakfast, at half-past eight o'clock. After the cloth was removed, the Rev. J. Crompton, of Norwich, took the chair, and opened the business of the meeting with some appropriate observations, and then called upon the secretary, the Rev. William Vidler, to read the annual report. The report, which was then read, spoke of the generally satisfactory state of the schools in connexion with the association; returns had been received from sixty-six schools, and fourteen schools had joined the society within the year. Owing to the limited state of the funds, the committee had been unable to issue any new publications within the year.

The meeting was then addressed by Revds. Dr. Hutton, G. Armstrong, J. Bride, B. Carpenter, Hall, Vidler, and Philp, and by Messrs. Henry, Preston and Dawson.

On the evening of the same day, a highly interesting conference of the friends of Sunday-school education, was held at Little Carter-lane, Doctors Commons,—Mr. Dawson, of Norwich, in the chair. Communications relating to the subjects proposed for the consideration of the conference were read by the secretary, from the Rev. T. Bowring, of Birmingham, Rev. H. Solly, of Tayistock, Rev. J. Odgers, of Plymouth, and Mr. E. Clephan, of Leicester; an animated discussion then ensued, in which the following gentlemen took part:—Revds. G. Armstrong, Dr. Hutton, J. C. Means, W. Vidler, A. Jones, J. Crompton, R. K. Philp; and Messrs. Squire, Coupland, &c. &c. Several resolutions were passed, and the conference closed a few minutes after nine, with singing and prayer.

SECOND READING OF THE DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL.

The second reading of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was moved by the Attorney-General on Thursday evening, June 6; and after a lengthened debate, in which the motion was supported by Messrs. Macauley, Bernal, Milnes, W. E. Gladstone, Sheil, and Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, and Lord Sandon—and opposed by Sir R. H. Inglis, Messrs. Plumptre, Colquhoun, and F. Maule, the House divided; and the second reading was carried by a majority of one hundred and ninety. We had intended to have culled from the speeches of Macaulay, Gladstone, Sheil, and Sir Robert Peel, some of the most striking passages; but these are so numerous, that we have felt it impossible to do so, in such a way as to be satisfactory to our readers, and, at the same time, consistent with our limits. We expect that a debate so important to the cause of religious liberty will be issued in a form more convenient for preservation than a newspaper sheet.

We subjoin an analysis of the division on the second reading.

	Ayes.	Noes.	Majority in favour of Bill.			Ayes	Noes
English	251	94	English	157	Conservative Liberals	123	105
Scotch	25	4	Scotch.	21		186	14
Irish	33	21	Irish	12		309	119
	309	119		190			

As there is no reason now to doubt the passing of the Bill into a law, it has become matter of consideration how the triumph of truth and freedom over the efforts of intolerance should be celebrated—and on this subject we have received the following letter.

The suggestion of the writer appears to us very judicious; but whether it be generally adopted or not, we trust there will be no unseemly exultation, calculated to wound the feelings of others, and perpetuate the sectarian passions which this attack on property and freedom has so largely engendered. And especially do we hope, that to any entertainment that may be held, ladies may be admitted, not only as spectators, but also as participants.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

DEAR SIR, — Liberal-minded Christians, of all denominations, but more especially Non-Subscribing Presbyterians, will naturally rejoice at the victory which justice and charity have acquired over bigotry and intolerance, in the success of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, — which, judging from the overwhelming majority on its second reading, will, without doubt, ere long, form part and parcel of the laws of the land. On such an occasion, there is great danger of our feelings being directed into a wrong channel: to view it as a triumph of one sect over another; to revel in unseemly exultation; and thereby wound the feelings of others, and widen the breach that separates us from other sects. We should view it in a far

different light; and rejoice, not so much that we are permitted to retain that which is our own, as in the advancement of the cause of religious freedom, and the spread of such principles "in high places," as will shelter every conscientious disciple of Christ in the profession of his convictions against all unrighteous oppression; that the predicted time is come, when "the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession." Should not all who participate in these sentiments raise their voices and their hearts to Him who is the benevolent ruler of all things? and that the same breeze might waft their united tribute of prayer and praise to the throne on high for their own or their brethren's deliverance from the snares of those who designed their overthrow—their destruction, let some day be fixed upon which shall be devoted to such exercises as each minister may judge most conducive to those purposes.

I would respectfully suggest, that we agree to choose the first Sabbath after the Bill shall have received the Royal Assent—if that happy event shall not have taken place before your next day of publication: if it have,—and that it may, God grant,—then let us take the second Sunday in July.—Sincerely yours,

June 17th, 1844.

LAICUS.

APPROACHING MEETING OF THE NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

[We have received the following letter, announcing the Fourth Triennial Meeting of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterians of Ireland, to be held in Dublin, on the 17th inst.]

MY DEAR SIR,—There never was a time since the morning star of the Reformation shed its glimmering light on the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—the birth-day of John Wickliffe—when the advocates of the Holy Scriptures, as the only infallible rule of faith and duty, were so emphatically called upon to be true to their principles. The *Conventicle Act*, the *Five Mile Act*, the *Test Act*, and the *Corporation Act*, are now repealed;—and the *Act* which made it "FELONY" to impugn the doctrine of the Trinity, and declared, that those who did so should "suffer the pains of death, as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy," has legally expired, in both Houses of Parliament, to the delight of freedom, charity, and humanity. What, then, remains to be done in the United Kingdom, in as far as religion is concerned, but that those who adhere to the great and distinguishing principles of the Reformation—the sufficiency of the Scriptures in matters of faith, and the right of private judgment in their interpretation—should unite in the dissemination and inculcation of these all-important views. It is only by the maintenance of these views, that sincerity and charity, the rights of conscience and free inquiry, can be protected from bigotry, superstition, and tyranny. When the first statesmen in the world—the Russels and the Peels—have so nobly distinguished themselves in the defence of these sacred principles, the men, however humble, whose province it is to impress

on the minds of the community, the *faith, hope, and charity*, of "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him," should double their diligence in promoting the work which it is both their duty and their interest to advocate and advance.

Allow me, then, through the medium of the *Bible Christian*, to remind my brethren of the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, that the fourth triennial meeting of the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians is "to be held in *Eustace-street Meeting-house, Dublin*, on the third Wednesday of July (the 17th day), at *twelve o'clock, noon*." As the signs of the times augur well for the friends of Gospel truth and human improvement, there ought to be a *full attendance of ministers and elders* at this approaching and important meeting.

It is to be hoped, that the Association will come to the determination of having more frequent meetings;—that ways and means will be devised for engaging well-qualified missionaries—and that the more opulent persons, who are in connexion with the three non-subscribing bodies, will aid in advancing a cause which has been, to the disgrace of some, most shamefully misrepresented, and, by the ignorance of others, altogether misunderstood.

Before I conclude, I beg to direct my friends of the Remonstrant Synod to the following Resolution, as contained in the minutes of last year:—"Resolved—That our next annual assembly be convened in *Eustace-street Meeting-house, Dublin*, on the *third Tuesday* of July, 1844, at the hour of *twelve o'clock, noon*;"—viz. the day before the Association is to meet.—Yours, respectfully,

F. BLAKELY.

Moneyres, June 14th, 1844.

OBITUARY.

DIED — On Friday, the 23rd of February last, in the 59th year of his age, WILLIAM MALCOLM, Esq. of Hill-hall. Descended from a long line of respectable ancestors, he largely inherited those upright and honourable principles, which recommended him to the continued confidence of several country gentlemen, for whom he acted as agent, to the mutual satisfaction of both landlords and tenants. In private life, he was so much distinguished by gentleness of disposition, and simplicity of manners, that he enjoyed the affectionate regard of a large circle of friends, who duly estimated the sterling qualities of his character, as a member of society, and who now sincerely mourn his premature removal from scenes of usefulness and honour. At the period of the Remonstrant separation from the General Synod of Ulster, he was an elder in the congregation of Lisburn; but, the majority of that worshipping Society determining to remain in connexion with a creed-bound church, he joined the congregation of Dunmurry, of which he continued a respected member until his death; and the writer of this obituary notice has much satisfaction in bearing testimony to the great liberality with which he always supported the cause which he had espoused.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. VIII.

AUGUST, 1844.

VOL. VI.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

WHAT is Christianity? To this question what various replies are made! Every sect has its own interpretation of the Gospel. Every intelligent believer has his own conception of what it is. They who regard it with equal reverence may differ widely when they come to explain it, for men's apprehensions vary where their appreciation is the same. Let us give our answer; not in the cold, rigid statements of a creed, but in the words which a rejoicing faith adopts, when it seeks utterance for the emotions as well as the convictions which it begets. Others speak confidently. Our belief is not less strong nor happy than theirs. Why, then, shall not we speak with confidence? We are condemned and misunderstood. Let us, if possible, place ourselves in our true position before and among our fellow-Christians. The question which we have proposed concerns us as much as them. We have the same right with them—and it is equally our duty—to make answer before the world. What is Christianity?

We answer first, *it is a Divine communication.* And this we say in respect alike to its source and its character, in reference both to its early history and its inward operation. Christianity came from God, directly and miraculously. It was not of human, but of Divine origin. Christ was a Divine messenger, the chief of all the messengers who ever bore instruction from Heaven to earth. We believe in Christianity as a Divine production, just as we believe that the world in which we live, the material system of things, is a Divine production. Man did not make it, and could not make it; it is not a human work. Man did not discover it; it is not the fruit of study, nor

the result of insight. It is a revelation — an immediate and extraordinary communication from the Almighty. It is not necessary for us to define the precise method of this communication; we need not attempt to expound, or master the philosophy of inspiration. The terms which we have used are definite enough, and are intelligible by every one. Christianity, we believe, in the first instance, came from God to Jesus and his apostles as a direct illumination, and they delivered it as instruction which they had received immediately from the Divine Spirit. It contained more than could have been collected from the stores of human wisdom, or have been shaped into the form and bearing of a religion for the world, by the most laborious skill, or the most clear-sighted philanthropy. Upon the first disciples it acted with the force of a Divine influence, and they recognised in its influence the action of truth flowing from God, through channels which he had supernaturally opened. And in our times, and in all times since the Gospel was preached by him whom “God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power,” the action of Christianity, whether upon the individual, or on society, has been a Divine action, inasmuch as it has been the action, not of what man has discovered, but of what God has promulgated.

We therefore bow to the authority of the Gospel. We allow of no appeal from its declarations of doctrine or duty. When we have ascertained what Christianity teaches, we stand in reverence before the mind and will of God. Our appeal is from all other instruction to this. In the examination of the writings through which we obtain an acquaintance with Christianity, we use all the fidelity which we should exercise in the study of any other documents purporting to contain important matter; and having satisfied ourselves that these are what they purport to be, we interpret them by the same laws which we apply to other writings; and we know not how else to arrive at their meaning. But having, by such investigation, informed ourselves of the truth as it is in Jesus, we accept that truth, and abide in it, and rejoice in it, and glory in it. It is to us “the wisdom of God and the power of God.” We do not sacrifice our reason on the altar of faith, for we have never found in Christianity anything repugnant to reason, nor should we expect that a commu-

nication from God to man would confound and throw discredit on the highest faculty which he has given to man. But we are willing that reason should be taught, and we place it at the feet of Jesus, to listen — not at his side, to dispute.

Christianity is to us a Divine communication. We receive it, we honour it as such. It is authoritative, it is final with us. We reject much of the belief of other Christians, not because we do not like it, but because we do not find it in the Gospel. We value the good thoughts and wise sayings of past ages. We are thankful for the assistance which those who are toiling along with us in the highway of life can give in surmounting its discouragements, or in discerning the forms of things around us. And we trust that future generations will be wiser and better, more far-sighted and more simple-hearted than we. But amidst the past we see one light brighter than all the rest, we hear one voice clearer than all others; and that light, we know, was kindled by God's own hand, and to that voice we hearken as to the voice of God himself. The help which we get from our fellow-travellers we feel is an insecure and treacherous reliance, when it is not offered in the meekness of a heart which recognises Christ as the infallible guide. And as we anticipate the brighter days of the future, we neither expect nor desire for our race a period when Christianity shall cease to be the sun of the moral heavens. We admire those in our day who consecrate themselves to reform, and we hold in honour the memory of some who, in ancient times, rose above the absurdities of Heathenism. But we can never place Bentham by the side of Paul, nor name Socrates in the same breath with Jesus. We believe in miracle, in inspiration, in Christianity as a Divine communication.

What is Christianity? We answer, secondly, *it is a message of mercy*. Man lay in the bondage and gloom of sin when Christ appeared as a messenger from God. He had separated himself from his Maker. The consciousness of sin disquieted him. He felt himself to be guilty, and in various ways sought to avert the displeasure which he knew must settle upon him from offended Heaven. Whether Jew or Heathen, he recognised a power above himself, whose authority he had contemned or defied.

He felt his need of forgiveness. He saw the necessity of terminating the variance between himself and the unseen object of his worship. It is one of the most remarkable facts in human history, that man has always been troubled at the thought of his own sinfulness. Conscience has pointed him to One higher than himself, and as he has looked up, he has trembled, for he has felt his unworthiness and ill desert. Hence the holocausts he has heaped on sacrificial altars. Hence the human victims he has immolated. Hence the penances he has inflicted alike on the body and the spirit, and the self-destruction by which he has hoped to atone for his offences. All these things proclaim the universal feeling, where Christianity has not lifted the burden of guilt from the soul. And where Christianity is known, it has only increased the sense of guilt, by giving new force to the great truths of duty and accountableness. Man is now a sinner, everywhere a sinner. Go where we may, we find sin assailing and cleaving to humanity. In the palace and in the hovel, with the student among his books, and with the peasant in the field, is sin to be found, in actual contact with the life of man. Innocence is seen only in childhood, perfection belongs not to the earth. That which is universally true, is universally confessed, at least in the soul's privacy. There is an universal acknowledgment of the need of pardon. The sinner must be reinstated in the Divine favour, and be delivered from the peril into which his sins have brought him.

Such is the condition, and such the consciousness of all mankind. Christianity meets the case which is here represented. It is a message of mercy from the Being in whose presence sin is disloyalty and impiety. God will forgive the sinner who repents and "brings forth fruits meet for repentance." No one need despair, not even the chief of sinners. God will freely forgive those who turn unto him, to do his will. He is reconciled to those who reconcile themselves to him. This is the burthen of the Gospel; and this, perhaps, more than anything else which belongs to it, makes it the Gospel—the glad tidings. God's mercy is sufficient for the wants of the world. This was the truth which Jesus taught. Yea, more; it was the truth which he died to place beyond all denial. Calvary attests the mercy of God. The cross has established it for ever.

Yet welcome as the revelation of mercy must be to the conscience-stricken sinner, many have been withheld by their fears from embracing it. The Christian doctrine of mercy has been disfigured and encumbered by human theories, till its divine features could scarcely be discerned beneath such perversions. We believe in this mercy, as it stands in the Gospel,—free, full, and imposing only the condition of a return to duty through a living faith. The man who believes in Christ so heartily as to forsake all, that he may follow Christ, will obtain pardon for his past offences, and need no longer anticipate the Divine displeasure. His sins are forgiven, for in him the atonement has taken effect—the reconciliation, that is, which restores him from the state of a disobedient to an obedient child, from a rebellious to a loyal subject.

In the views which we entertain of the Divine mercy, we differ considerably from large numbers of our fellow-Christians who think we do not give a sufficiently prominent place to this mercy. It seems to us strange that we should be so misunderstood. We flee to the mercy of God as our only refuge; we cling to it, as did the ancient Israelite to the horns of the altar, as where neither vengeance nor despair can follow us. We would not give up our confidence in the mercy of God, for all that heaven and earth could offer; for without it, heaven would be no heaven, and earth would be a hell. And we cherish this confidence, because Christ has given us encouragement and instruction to this effect, and has even died that it might be sealed in his blood. *Therefore* do we believe in a mercy large enough even to cover our guilt. When men ask us, what reliance or hope we provide for the sinner whom we call to repentance, we reply,—“That which Christ provided—the mercy of God.” Yes; we believe in mercy, announced, pledged, applied in Christ.

What is Christianity? We answer, thirdly, *it is an instrument of regeneration*. We have seen in what a state Christianity found the world; a state of guilt, disobedience, and estrangement from God. Man was enslaved and polluted, for passion had corrupted him, and temptation had led him captive. Mankind were sunk in depravity. God had “made man upright, but they had sought out many inventions,” by which the soul was deluded, debased, and enfeebled. Christianity came to raise man

out of this state. It came to deliver him from his sins, through repentance, and a change in heart and life. It came to renew the character, and so to renew the man,—to change, not his nature, but its exercises,—to establish a new dominion within him, and to open a new world to his view in what he saw around him. Therefore was the instruction of Christ directed first and chiefly to this point. He sought the sinner that he might rescue him from his degradation; and he addressed him as a sinner, that he might at once remind him of what he must do. The regeneration of the human heart, by which its dispositions, desires, and purposes should be deprived of the evil quality which affected them, and be filled with that holy element which should convert them into acceptable offerings on the altar of religion,—this was the object for which the Gospel was bestowed in view of the immediate wants of man, and this the result which it was intended, in its primary action, to accomplish. This result was witnessed. There is not a more remarkable chapter in the history of our race, than that which records the change which Christianity wrought in the early believers,—turning selfishness into love, and avarice into generosity, and sensuality into self-denial; making the effeminate manly, the ambitious humble, the revengeful meek, the formalist a spiritual worshipper, the irreligious, devout and exemplary; converting a persecutor into an apostle, a hypocritical disciple of Moses into a sincere follower of Jesus, an idolatrous and persecuted Pagan into a real Christian! What more could we say than is conveyed by this last expression to him who understands, on the one hand the requisitions of Christianity, and on the other, the habits of Pagan life? What a contrast do they present! Yet how often was it realized in the experience of the same individual!

Such was the operation of Christianity in its commencement. But its work is still regeneration. Men are still corrupt. The world is full of wickedness. Men are depraved; depraved by their own will and act, but only the more depraved, because their will consents, and their own act aims the blow at the soul's integrity. They need to be converted, to be changed, now, as much as in the days of Christ and his apostles. They need to have their attention arrested, their thoughts turned in upon themselves,

their souls cleansed, their lives reformed. The visible change will, in most instances, perhaps, be less strongly marked, but the effect which may be traced to the Gospel will be scarcely less stupendous, and in no degree less important, than was produced in Jerusalem or Corinth.

We believe, therefore, in regeneration — as a work which it is the office of Christianity to effect by bringing the soul to a voluntary relinquishment of all its evil habits, and the adoption of new principles and exercises. We believe in depravity — as the condition into which all mankind are brought by the force of temptation acting upon ignorance and weakness; in human, but not in natural depravity; in universal, but not in total depravity; in acquired, but not in hereditary depravity. We believe that the first step in obedience is repentance. We believe in Christianity as the great instrument of regeneration.

What is Christianity? We answer, fourthly, *it is a means of spiritual education*. Man was created for a high excellence. Everything within and around him proclaims this. His endowments point out progress as the law of his being. His circumstances lay upon him a discipline which finds its only explanation in its fitness to exercise and train his nobler faculties. Human nature is a contradiction to itself, and human life a problem beyond our solution, if we were not made to achieve a high destiny. Man was created for perfection, as was everything else. But everything below him reaches its perfection by an involuntary growth; and that which is above him, he has reason to believe, is subject to the same law, of an intelligent and self-induced progress, with himself. He must secure his own perfection by toil and warfare, by patience and long perseverance, by a voluntary adoption and an earnest pursuit of the loftiest aims which can invite human endeavour. These aims are spiritual. It is spiritual training therefore which he needs. He needs to be addressed, instructed, and helped, as one in whom spiritual powers of immeasurable compass are concealed. There are no limits which language can describe, or imagination define, to the growth of the soul. It was meant by the Creator to put forth new energy and to reap new satisfaction through its whole course. Every year must find it wiser, stronger, richer, than the previous year. In

manhood it must be more vigorous than in youth, and in old age have a goodness that time shall have ripened to a still fuller expansion. Advancement, ascent, should be its constant purpose; acquisition, conquest, must be the title of its whole experience. "Never to rest, but ever to rise," expresses the condition on which the Infinite Father has offered it a participation in his own intelligence and happiness.

But in this perpetual progress man needs counsel and help. For it is a conflict, we have said, which he must maintain. Freedom, purity, perfection, he can gain only by hard struggle. He must work out his own salvation from much of error and infirmity, even after the dominion of evil has been cast off. He needs therefore guidance, encouragement, and support. All these, and all else which he needs in his pursuit of the end for which he was created—advice, example, command, persuasion; in a word, all the instruction and assistance which it is possible for him to receive—Christianity either affords or promises. We shall never understand, nor duly appreciate Christianity, till we contemplate it from this point of view. It is the instructor as well as the purifier of the soul, the educator as truly as the redeemer of the race. Man is redeemed from sin, only that he may be educated for the largest and purest excellence. He is called to repentance, that he may be afterwards called to "glory and virtue."

We believe in the possibility of a continual progress towards perfection, because we believe that it is made our duty, and because we see in Christianity the means for enabling us to accomplish what is required by the Divine law. As in the death of Christ we see a pledge of mercy, so in his life we read the assurance of success. "Because I live, ye shall live also," are words which, as we interpret the term "life," are full of meaning. With us there is no life where there is not growth, a growth which manifests itself in effort and crowns itself with victory. As we believe that man is never so fallen that he need sink into hopeless ruin, so do we believe that he can never attain such an eminence of character that he may not rise higher. And as we believe that no one is so degraded that the motions of a spiritual life may not be quickened in him, we also believe that no one has acquired such superiority to temptation that he needs not to maintain a watchful humility.

We believe moreover in Christianity as the spring of all social improvement. We have no confidence in any scheme for the advancement of society which is not built upon faith in the Gospel. We do not want intelligence without faith. It is like giving the steam-engine power without direction. Disaster and ruin must be the result. An educated people without the restraining influences of Christianity would only be a nation of accomplished scoundrels. Neither do we believe in the efficacy of circumstances without the operation of Christian truth in the soul. In other words, we do not believe in any permanent or real amendment in society, except through the rectification of individual character. Christianity reaches social abuses through personal regeneration, and secures the highest order of the social state by evolving the spiritual life in the different parts. Christianity must have universal prevalence and universal control; this is our belief. It must sanctify the meanest employment, and determine the worth of the highest station. Judges must clothe themselves with its purity, and rulers with its authority. The citizen must be a Christian in his political relations, and government be Christian in all its action. Like the invisible providence of God which holds together the material world, this Divine religion must hold together the moral world; and as that numbers "the very hairs of our heads," so this must govern our least important or least deliberate purpose. "Philosophy the guide of life," said the ancients; "Christianity the guide of life," say we. The guide of life in all conditions and all places—public and private—from the first prayer of childhood to the failing accents of the death-bed. We believe in the constant influence of Christianity as the means of spiritual education for man.

What is Christianity? We answer, fifthly, *it is a revelation of another world.* We say of another world, rather than of another life, because Christianity does not merely teach that we shall live again. It announces more than the fact of immortality; it proclaims retribution, and communicates some information respecting its laws and circumstances. To have disclosed a future state of being, alone, would have but partially relieved the want of man. This indeed was an immense addition to the amount of human knowledge. As *we* read the books of Providence

and Scripture, it appears to us that we are indebted to the Gospel for a clear and authoritative revelation of an existence beyond the grave; for Providence seems to us to afford no decisive testimony on this subject, and although the later Hebrew Scriptures may contain allusions to the doctrine, they do not present it as a part of Divine revelation. Men believed in immortality before Christ came; but they believed on insufficient grounds—on grounds which would not bear the test of philosophical scrutiny. We believe in the immortality of man, because he whom the Father sent, the true and faithful witness, has spoken concerning it in unequivocal terms. Therefore do we recognise in Christianity the author of a hope which overcomes the fear of death and penetrates the gloom of the grave. Therefore do we account Christianity the great Comforter of man in his sorrow, who soothes his bereavement with visions of heavenly life, and teaches him to say of the departed, that they are gone, not that they are lost.

But the instruction of the Gospel does not cease at this point. If it did, although it might solace the bereaved, it would not hold out sufficient motive to man in his conflict with evil. He must know, not only that he shall live again, but that he shall there receive the recompense of his "patient continuance in well doing" here. He must know, too, that negligence and transgression here will be followed by a righteous retribution hereafter. The Divine law of duty—constant and progressive duty—must have its sanctions, and since they are not drawn in sufficient force from human experience in this world, they must be drawn from the certainty of future judgment. Christianity brings them thence, and applies them to the soul's sensibility, awakening its fear, while it stimulates its hope, and by the terrors as well as the mercies of the Lord persuading it to render a steadfast obedience.

We believe in a retribution after death—a retribution just, strict, and sure to fall upon every soul that will not fear God and do his will. We do not believe that a finite sin can deserve, or under the government of a holy God can receive, infinite punishment; but we do believe that he who dies in his sins must endure suffering in another world, of which the gnawing worm and the unquenchable fire are but faint emblems; and we believe also that so long as a soul continues impenitent, it will

continue to suffer. We think, moreover, that through Christianity we learn what are the essential principles on which this retribution will be administered; the first among them in clearness and solemnity being these,—that to whom much has been committed, of him will much be required; and, that condemnation will be apportioned to character, the most guilty being visited with the heaviest woe. In regard likewise to them who shall be counted worthy to inherit the blessedness of the Father's presence, we learn that they shall be rewarded according to the fidelity which they shall have manifested on earth; that there will be difference of condition, and not a broad uniformity, in heaven. We gather too from the express disclosures of the Gospel, as well as by inference from the truths which we have noticed, that the future will be a social state. And we conclude from the manner in which it is described, that it must be a state of progress, and not of stationary, unchangeable excellence—of happiness, or of misery, incapable of increase.

These are our persuasions concerning another world, drawn from the Christian Scriptures. They are clear, precise, solemn, and authoritative. We dare not believe less than we have now repeated, because we presume not to set aside the teaching of Christ. We dare not believe more, because we do not find that he has taught more. We believe in future retribution with just as strong a faith as in human immortality. If we doubted the one, we should doubt the other. We believe in another world, as it has been opened to our view through the Gospel. And we rejoice with trembling, as we stand before the spectacle which is there presented, and behold mercy and judgment seated together upon the eternal throne.

What is Christianity? We answer now, on a review of what we have said, that it is a Divine communication, that it is a message of mercy, that it is an instrument of regeneration, that it is a means of spiritual education, and that it is a revelation of another world. We might add yet other replies, but these are sufficient. If they do not embrace all that a grateful faith might suggest in answer to the inquiry, they exhibit the principal elements of "the glorious Gospel of Christ." If we must have a Confession of Faith, these shall be its five points. Inspiration, mercy, regeneration, progress, retribution,—these words shall

designate our articles of belief. Inspiration, which speaks of God, the Source of truth; mercy, which proclaims man a sinner, and meets his wants as such; regeneration, which denotes the change in his character which is indispensable to a Christian life or hope; progress, by which the soul presses on towards perfection; and retribution, which discloses the secrets of immortality and judgment. All this knowledge, influence, and benefit have come through Christ, the one Mediator between God and man. On his name we lean as on an immovable rock; and in him, "though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

E. S. GANNETT.

THE WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WE will speak of the women of the olden time. Of Eve, and of the wives of the patriarchs, we have but little to say; their characters are well known, and have been frequently commented upon: we have ourselves glanced at them in former papers.* We will speak of the mother of Moses. How great must have been her faith, how fond her love, when, having made her little ark of bulrushes, she committed to the waters her *goodly child*. Who would refuse to sympathize with her, when, through the Providence of God, all turned out as she fondly hoped, and she became the nurse of her own son? We must suppose, she endeavoured to imbue his young mind, as far as was possible, with the truths of religion, and that he held frequent communication afterwards with her, having been instructed by her of their close relationship, and displaying, as he did, the strongest sympathies with his afflicted brethren.

Zipporah, who was given to Moses for a wife, was first seen by him as he sat, a weary traveller, by the well where the inhabitants of the land of Midian assembled to draw water. According to the custom of the East, the priest of Midian sent his daughters to draw water for the flocks. In a fray where the strong oppressed the weak, Moses, taking the part of the latter, was conducted by the young maidens to their home, and Zipporah, one of the seven daughters of Jethro, became his wife. Moses after

* "Simple Thoughts on Genesis," commenced in the *Christian Pioneer*, and concluded in the *Bible Christian*.

some time takes her with him into Egypt. Finding how great the trials and difficulties which awaited him there, we may presume was the cause of his sending her back; which he is recorded to have done, in the eighteenth chapter of Exodus, where we are told she was restored to him by her father.

Miriam, the sister of Aaron, as she is called in Scripture, is the next claiming our attention—we are not told whether she was also the sister of Moses. It may have been that Aaron was the son of either the father or mother of Moses only: and thus Miriam might have been his eldest sister, and connected with Moses, but not closely united. We would like rather to think she was his sister; the same who fondly watched him on the waters; if so, she must have been his elder by some years. We first meet with her as a prophetess or poetess, when, taking the timbrels, she leads the dance and song of triumph, when the women join in the celebration of the passage through the Red Sea, and the signal destruction of Pharaoh and his host. The next time we meet with her, it is an altered scene. The triumphant poetess and musician is condemned, and a leper!—how short-lived is human glory! the very joy in which we exult, oft-times itself brings our downfall!—So it may have been with her, for her sin has been presumption. She and her brother have murmured against the servant of the Lord, and have angered him. Aaron pleads for her with Moses, and he with God. “And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God! I beseech thee.”

The daughters of Zelophehad made a wise and reasonable request which was the cause of a new law being made concerning inheritance.

Deborah, the prophetess, was a judge in Israel, and also a warrior; for she went up with Barak against the enemy, he having refused to go without her. She also prophesied to him the event of the war: “The Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” Deborah’s song of praise after the battle, far exceeds, in our opinion, any of the triumphs of the Grecian bard; he lauds his heroes—she praises Jehovah.

What shall we say for Jael? She was praised by her contemporaries; and, perhaps, considering the times in which she lived, we may not condemn her. But if trea-

chery and cruelty be fair in war, how evil a thing must war be in itself! Her conduct assuredly was most unwomanly.

Jeptah's daughter is entitled to our praise, for the affectionate energy with which she celebrated her father's return, and the tender fortitude with which she sought to calm his trouble on her account, and to assure him of her ready submission to his will. "And she said unto him: my father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth." She shows piety to God, also, in urging her father to keep his vow: "forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon."

In Delilah we see the ready invention, often ascribed to women, used for evil purposes;—her heartless conduct toward the great hero, Samson, demands our strongest reprobation.

The mother of the idolater Micah, was herself a worshipper of false gods, and had, doubtless, brought up her son badly from his youth; for he speaks to her with insolence, and is unrebuked by her, either for his disrespect or his dishonesty. Thinking the best thing she can do for her son, is, to prepare for him an image for worship, she gives the silver to the founder who makes a false god. There are some mothers like the parent of Micah, who guide their sons, not to the altar of the true God, but to the shrine of Mammon;—to the false god of the day, whatever that happens to be, — the idol may be wealth, fame, fortune, falsehood, or the applause of men. Such mothers instruct their children to make the opinion of men their god.

We have now to speak of Naomi and her two daughters-in-law. Of Orpah, a few words will suffice. For ten years, she, though a Moabitess, was the happy wife of a man who served Jehovah. For ten years, she had before her eyes the conduct of her pious and kind mother-in-law (she, the latter, appeared to have won the affections of both her daughters). Yet did Orpah, after her widowhood, satisfy herself with *kissing her mother-in-law*, and turning back to her own idolatrous people, and to her false gods! Alas! she knew not the prize she was throwing from her!—she was satisfied to return; she was "of

the world, and the world will love its own;" she will, as she parts from her mother-in-law, weep for an hour, and then think of her no more. But on no such shallow ground did Naomi plant her affections, when she took to her heart the faithful and believing Ruth! SHE knew it was no slight honour to belong to the people of the Lord; and no small comfort in her bereavement, to cling to the mother of her husband: faithfully as a convert, and fondly as a daughter, did she say to Naomi, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God." Oh! Naomi, art thou not comforted now? wherefore reply to thy welcoming friends, "Call me not Naomi (or beautiful), call me Marah (bitter)? Hath not the Lord dealt well with thee, Naomi, when he has given to thee so sweet a gift, as the clinging heart of this thy daughter? It is not always that human attachment meets with so signal a return and reward, as did this of Ruth toward Naomi; but that her preference of the service of Jehovah, to the idolatry of her own people, should have found its full recompense, is not singular; for who ever served the Lord, and had reason to complain that it was an unprofitable service?" "Oh! fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him." Boaz, the kinsman of her late husband, was, from the first, fully sensible of her worth; for, in reply to her humble acknowledgment of his courtesy, in permitting her, though a stranger, to reap in his field, he says, "It hath fully been showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law, since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people whom thou knewest not heretofore." From Ruth the Messiah descended—from Ruth, the Moabitess: is there not, in this fact, an intimation, that "God is not a God of the Jews alone, but of the Gentiles also"?

The next in order of the women of Scripture, is Hannah, and her vexatious companion and rival, Peninnah. As year by year, Elkanah, the husband of these two women, prepared to go up to the house of the Lord, to keep the festivals, as we may suppose, he made, it would seem, presents to his household. To Peninnah and to her children, "he gave portions;" yet, notwithstanding that, he gave unto Hannah "a worthy portion," her rival taunted her; "therefore she wept and did not eat." Her

sorrow at being childless, arose, not alone from the triumphs of her rival, but from the universal opinion of those times, that a numerous offspring was a proof of the favour of God, and, therefore, made a wife to be held in honour by her companions. Hannah appears to have been very meek; and to have added to her meek deportment a deep piety and trust in God. Knowing well the true source of consolation, she had recourse to fervent prayer; and also bound herself by a solemn vow, which she religiously kept. Alas! poor Hannah! in all this deep excitement of feeling and trust, it was a hard thing to be mistaken, and harshly judged and reproved by an eye-witness. One might suppose that the wise and experienced priest might have more readily recognised the signs of an ardent "sorrowful spirit;" but his unpleasant and irritating mistake only renders more apparent her meek and amiable temper; and Hannah answered and said, "No, my Lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have drunk neither wine, nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial; for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto."

It might be said by some that Hannah should not have asked so fervently for an earthly blessing; that it would have become her better to have said, "Lord, bow my spirit to thy will." It may be so: and we cannot tell but that a still higher blessing might have been granted to her. Yet, on the other hand, may we not suppose, that, as it was in this way the Lord was pleased to try her, it pleased him well to reward her faith in that wherein she so fully trusted him. And, after all, what is prayer? Is it not the bringing before the Lord the wants and desires of our hearts? The more spiritual and exalted these desires are, assuredly the better; but we must sometimes, to Him who has connected us with human ties, pour out these deep feelings, which He alone knows how to pity and supply; when we cannot always, like our perfect and holy Redeemer, return and say, "Father, not my will, but thine be done," let us not do it in hypocrisy, but bow our souls the lower before Him who made the heart, and, it may be, will pity and excuse our frailty, when we do not pretend to hide it from Him or from ourselves. For our own parts, instead of being inclined to cavil, we believe

the prayer was acceptable to that Almighty Being, to whom it was so faithfully offered, as seems apparent enough from its being complied with. That it was acceptable, Hannah felt in her heart at the time; for after it had been concluded, and Eli the priest had given her his blessing, she "went away, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad." Such is the effect of faith; it makes sorrow, joy, and renders powerless the shafts of malice. But Hannah, after a time, returns again to Eli, and she said, "Oh, my Lord! as thy soul liveth, my Lord, I am the woman who stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth, he shall be lent unto the Lord. And he (Samuel) worshipped the Lord there." Hannah's song of thanksgiving is recorded, in which she glorifies the Lord, and acknowledges, in triumphant language, his mercy to the low and the helpless, and glances a little at the destruction of the proud. Hannah was a wise mother: she did not think parental love consisted in pampering and caressing her new-found treasure, and making an idol of her son; but as soon as he was weaned, she took him, and left him in the temple. "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." His mother delighted herself in making his garments, and "brought them to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice." Hannah was fondly beloved of her husband, as she well deserved to be, being a meek wife and a pious mother.

M. B.

THE NAME OF CHRIST.

BY JOSEPH BARKER.

I HAVE many objections to any other name, but the name of Christ.

1. No other name would fit me. I am not a Methodist; and I am not a Calvinist; I am not a Baptist, and I am not a Quaker; I am not an Athanasian, and I am not a Socinian. I am nothing that could be correctly designated by any of the names belonging to any existing sect.

If, therefore, I were to take the name of any existing sect, I should be taking a false name, — a name that did not correctly or fully express or declare my sentiments and character. You may tell me to take some new name. But I know of no name that would exactly fit me. Besides, I do not want a name to declare or point out my opinions. I do not regard opinions as sufficiently important to give me a name. The most important things, in my estimation, are, faith in Christ, and hope of immortality, and love to God and man. Opinions are trifles compared with these. I want a name that points out, or declares my faith, my hope, my character, — a name that means faith in Christ, and hope of eternal glory, and love to God and all the human family. **CHRISTIAN**, or **DISCIPLE OF CHRIST**, *does* mean all this, and it means no more; and I therefore cling to this name, and reject all others. **CHRISTIAN**, or **DISCIPLE OF CHRIST**, says nothing about opinions or ceremonies; it signifies no theological system, no theory of interpretation. It neither means a believer in Christ's supreme divinity, nor a believer in his mere humanity; it neither means a Socinian, nor an Athanasian; a Trinitarian, nor a Unitarian; a Baptist, nor a Quaker; a Methodist, nor a Roman Catholic: it means simply a believer in Christ's office, — a believer in his *Messiah-ship*, — a believer that he was anointed or appointed by God, to teach, to rule, and to save mankind, — a believer who places himself under Christ's instruction and government, and who expects eternal life through him. This is what I am, — this is all I wish to be, — this is what I hope and intend to be as long as I live. My opinions are almost always undergoing some change; so that if I were to take to myself a name from my opinions, I must be frequently changing my name. But while my opinions undergo changes, my faith, my hope, my love, remain the same: and the name **CHRISTIAN** serves me to the last. 2. Again, if I take to myself a name from any of my opinions, I identify myself with all who hold that opinion, and cut myself off from all who do not hold it. And I know no opinion which may not be held by *bad* men; and I do not consider it proper to identify myself with bad men. And I know no opinion which may not be rejected by good men, — by godly believers in Christ, — and I consider it

not right to cut myself off from the fellowship of any that are truly Christians. Besides, if I give myself a name derived from any particular opinion, and so identify myself with all who hold it, I am quickly made answerable for all the other opinions which are held by such men, as well as for all their vices. If I call myself a Trinitarian, I am made answerable, not only for the moderate and comparatively harmless notion of the three *Quidities*, or three somewhats, of South or Wall, but for the three persons, three subsistences, or three Gods, of Sherlock and Richard Watson. If I call myself a Unitarian, I am made answerable for all the foolish or extravagant notions, and even for all the theological and critical conjectures, as well as for all the moral imperfections or failings that ever were found in connexion with any mortal that ever bore that name. If I call myself a Calvinist, I make myself answerable for the horrors and impossibilities of Calvin's Institutes, and the cruelties of Calvin's intolerance. If I call myself a Wesleyan, I make myself answerable for all the follies, and mysteries, and childish conjectures, and blundering comments, and orthodox errors, and flat contradictions, which are found in his writings, as well as for the imperfections and improprieties in his character. But when I call myself a Christian, I am answerable for nothing but for the truth of Christ's doctrine, and for the excellency and divinity of Christ's character and mission. When I call myself a Christian, I simply mean that I believe in Jesus as the Messiah, that I place myself under him as my teacher, my ruler, and my Saviour, for the purpose of learning and practising his doctrine, and that I desire to obtain eternal blessedness through him. And, lastly, if I take no name but that of Christ, any person may join with me, without being answerable for anything about me, beyond my faith in Christ, and my desire to understand and obey his doctrine. But if I take any other name, I make it impossible for persons to join with me, without taking upon themselves the same name, and making themselves answerable for all that the name may signify or import. Now all who believe in Christ, and place themselves under Christ's government, can submit to be called Christians, and to be made answerable for all that the word Christian implies. But all Christians cannot submit to be called Trinitarians,

Unitarians, Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, or Calvinists,—they cannot make themselves answerable for all that any of these names may imply. For these, then, and for other reasons, which I have not time, at present, to set down, I prefer the name of Christian, and the name of Christian alone.

A WORD ON TOTAL ABSTINENCE,

(From the Christian Register.)

WHAT is it that gives prevalence and permanency and support not only to intemperance, but to all the moral evils of the earth? What is it but a wrong state of the public sentiment in regard to some point connected with these evils? Every prevalent moral evil is a habit of wrong acting in the community growing out of a habit of wrong thinking in the community. Moreover it is not those who are most deeply dyed in the infamy of the outward act that do most to give perpetuity and stability to the evil. It is those who, holding on upon the principle of wrong thinking, yet keep themselves clear from the stain of the outward acting, that give the only efficient and solid support to the evil in the community. This is a very important consideration. It is not in men's nature to sustain themselves in immoral and degrading practices, when unsupported in them by any voices but those of men as deep in those practices as themselves. All men have consciences,—an inward testimony to an essential difference between right and wrong,—consciences indeed liable to be perverted; and they are perverted by the prevalence in the community of a wrong moral sentiment;—that is, by the prevalence of principles which justify any immoral practices,—by their prevalence especially among people not guilty of those practices,—among people of respectability and weight of character. But when that public moral sentiment is changed, is reformed,—when those unsound principles, which justify particular immoral practices, are dropped, renounced, and openly condemned by all people of respectability and weight of character,—those practices must fall. There might be some rare exceptions; but in general, the most abandoned of men could not long sustain themselves in evil courses, against the force of a corrected moral sentiment. Their self-

esteem, the last treasure which the human heart will consent to part with, could not bear the shock of finding the whole respectable portion of the community no longer acknowledging principles that would justify them. Their perverted consciences, no longer upheld in their delusion by the countenance of good men, would speak out in their natural tones; they would find public sentiment, a sense of duty, and their own interest all impelling them to go in one direction; and they would not be men if they did not go in it.

These remarks apply to other prevailing forms of moral evil as well as that of the use of alcoholic mixtures;—for example,—slave-holding,—duelling,—public wars,—gambling,—lewdness, and any other; they point out what is the remedy,—viz. a corrected public moral sentiment,—and in what direction that remedy is to be sought,—that if you would supplant any prevailing vice or sin, you are not to begin your efforts with those deeply stained with that sin, whose moral sense is perverted by habitual wrongdoing, and whom various other circumstances may make unapproachable to you;—but address those who, standing aloof from the degrading practice, at least from the worst forms of it, yet retain such loose modes of thinking about it and speaking of it, as give it effectually their countenance and their apologizing or justifying construction; try to bring *them* to think and speak more justly of it,—to think and speak of it as a sin in the sight of God,—to join with you in using all proper means to bring others to regard it in the same light. Thus seek to form a pure and right moral sentiment in regard to the evil. Seek to embody that sentiment, by bringing together those who agree in it in societies, having for their object the banishing that evil from the community, by means of their great sentiment constantly reiterated in the ears of the public, and impressed upon the minds of old and of young, that that evil is a sin, that good men and consistent Christians should not by any means practice it, or countenance it.

This loose and pernicious notion in regard to alcoholic drinks, that, used in moderation, they are harmless and even beneficial, has, until recently, prevailed in the community almost universally,—and even now does very extensively. It is a brief proposition, but it has been

the source of incalculable mischief. Upon this false maxim is based that stupendous fabric of immorality, with all its appendages of crime and misery, which goes under the name of intemperance. Men have felt themselves sustained by it when their consciences would else have troubled them. Knock that supporting block away, correct public sentiment on this point, teach the true doctrine, that alcohol is a poison; that however mixed and diluted, it is still a poison;—a poison to the mind and affections more even than to the body; that total abstinence from it is the duty of every man, woman, and child; let this true and healthful sentiment spread through the land and undermine the loose and pernicious one which has unwittingly wrought so much ruin,—and this great and portentous evil will fall before it.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

BIRDS:

BEING AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE CHILDREN OF HOLYWOOD SUNDAY SCHOOL, ON SUNDAY, THE 7TH JULY, 1844, BY MR. ROBERT PATTERSON.

MY friend, the Rev. Mr. M'Alester, having asked me to deliver the usual monthly address to the children attending the Sunday School, I come before you at his request; and the subject I have chosen to speak to you about, is BIRDS. We are all fond of birds. We like to mark the sea-gull sitting tranquilly upon the wave that rises and falls beneath. We like to see the sparrow hopping about our doors, and the swallow sweeping in graceful circles to her nest under the eaves of our houses; and we all love to listen to the song of the lark, when, like a speck in the sky, he pours a flood of melody down upon the earth. I have chosen Birds as my subject, therefore, because they are universal favourites; I have chosen them for another reason,—because they are very frequently mentioned in your Bibles. You there read of the eagle, the ostrich, the pelican, the bittern, and of many other birds; and you find that birds have borne a very prominent part in some remarkable events. A dove was the agent by which the

olive branch was conveyed to Noah, who thus "knew that the waters" of the deluge "were abated from off the earth;" and by ravens was the prophet Elijah supplied with food in the wilderness.

Birds are very wonderful creatures; but because we see them daily about us, we are apt not to think them so. If they were not thus common, the case would be very different. Now, let us suppose that none of us had ever seen a bird; and that a traveller, who had been in distant countries, came home and told us that he had there met with animals that did not swim through the waters like fishes, nor walk on the earth like dogs or horses, but that they went far higher into the air than a boy's kite, and could move through it at the rate of forty, or sixty, or perhaps an hundred miles in the hour. How surprised we would all be at this wonderful story! and if we believed the traveller was telling us the truth, how eagerly would we listen to his description of animals, that, instead of being clothed with scales, like a fish, or hair, like a cow, had the body covered with feathers; and instead of having two fore-legs, like those of our common animals, had the limbs of the fore-part of the body of a different shape, and so contrived, that, by their movements, the creature was not only sustained in the air, but propelled rapidly forward.

If the little boys and girls who are now before me, had heard all this for the first time, and were talking to each other about these strange, unknown animals, all would infer that they must be differently formed from beasts or fishes, and would try to imagine how they were made. Perhaps one little boy would say, "Their bones must be very strong, for unless they were so, they could not take such long flights." But another might say, "No: if the bones were very strong, they would be very heavy, and then the bird would not be able to fly at all. The bones, I think, should be very light." Another, who was a little more advanced, might say, "It would not be enough that they should be both strong and light at the same time, if that were possible; but the little cords or muscles by which the bones are moved, must be so made as to work with great vigour and effect." But then a fourth might exclaim, "All this would not be sufficient. If I run for a quarter of a mile, I am out of breath; how

are birds made so long-winded, that they can go at so great a rate, and for so long a time?"

These several points of inquiry can only be answered by the actual examination of the body of a bird. It will then be found, that the bones do combine the two opposite qualities of lightness and strength. They do so, not only because of the material of which they are composed, but also because of the manner in which they are severally shaped and united together. The muscles, also, will be found to be so formed and so placed, that they act with the greatest possible advantage; and with regard to the breathing, an arrangement is made, adapted expressly to the wants and habits of birds, and peculiar to them. The lungs by which they breathe, are different in shape from those by which we breathe. Their blood is more freely exposed to the air, and the passages by which the air enters the different parts of the body are so numerous, that it not only finds its way to all, but even penetrates into the bones themselves. In this way the body is rendered light and buoyant, and increased vigour is given to every part of the frame.

If an architect, accustomed in planning his buildings, to calculate in what way he could shape his timbers, so as to join the greatest lightness with the greatest strength, were to examine the frame-work of the bones of a bird, he would find all his contrivances were there surpassed. If a mechanic were to plan how best the bones might be shaped for certain purposes, and how they could best be moved, he would find his most skilful devices fall far short of the mechanism there exhibited. Why is it, that the learning of the architect, and the skill of the mechanic, are outdone by the perfection displayed in the structure of the most common birds? For this simple reason,—*God made them.* In looking at birds, therefore, I wish you, in the first instance, to bear in mind this truth,—*God made them.*

Now, you all know the bodies of birds are warm. Their blood is not cold like that of a frog or a fish. It is not only warm, but is found, in consequence of the way they breathe, to be warmer than that which is in our bodies, or in those of our common domestic animals. This heat would soon pass away from birds, as they fly through the air, or swim in the water, unless their bodies had some

kind of covering to keep in the heat. A covering has therefore been provided for them, which is, at the same time, light and warm. It is, as you all know, composed of feathers; those next the body being shorter and finer; those external, larger, stronger, and tinted with a splendid variety of colours. But this feathery garment would soon be spoiled: the sun, and the wind, and the rain, would all do it injury, though in different ways. That it may be kept in its perfection, it is not only renewed from time to time; but each bird is furnished with a gland, which secretes an oily material fit for the preservation of the feathers. You have seen birds arranging their tost plumage, cleansing off all impurities—smearing the feathers with this oil—and as you would say, “preening” themselves. You know that if your hands have touched oil or butter, the oiled parts cannot be wet; the oil throws off or repels the water. Now, in those birds that live much upon the water, the oil is very abundant. They smear their feathers with it—the water is repelled—it does not reach to their skin—and thus the heat of their bodies is kept up even when they are for hours in the water.

When you look, therefore, upon the clothing of birds, and find all the arrangements about it so excellent, let me beg you will remember it is so, because *God clothes them.*

Now, let me suppose I had a very large net, a net like that which you see the fishermen using, but so large, that it would extend not only over Holywood, but over a space of two miles on every side of it; and that I caught at one time all the birds both on sea and land, which the net covered, and brought them here together. Suppose I could collect all the little boys and girls who lived in that area, and bring them also here at the same time. If I were then to tell them the different kinds of food these several birds required, I might say to one group of children, “These birds live upon fish—I put them under your care—give them their proper food.” I might say to others, “These birds feed upon small insects, which live under the bark of trees—you will supply them.” To others I might say, “These birds feed upon other birds, and small animals—I put them under your care.” I might desire an assemblage of girls to furnish the seeds, the grains, the worms and caterpillars, which form the sustenance of birds of a different kind; or I

might place under the charge of a number of boys, another family of birds, who require that their food should be flesh, and, perhaps, that flesh a little putrid. Now, if you were to exert yourselves as much as ever you could, do you think you could supply all these several birds with their respective food for a single week? I much doubt if you could. And I am quite sure you would not have all the birds alive at the end of a month. Some would perhaps have died from being overfed, and others of starvation. Yet as it is, week after week, and month after month, all these birds find out for themselves their proper food. We are not aware of the amount of individual exertion it requires. The labour of procuring the food is not obvious. We have to think about it, before we rightly estimate its extent. And then we naturally ask ourselves, How are these irrational creatures so wonderfully provided for? There is but one answer, *God feeds them*. He teaches to each, what is its proper food, and by what means it may be procured; and thus most truly and emphatically may it be said, *God feeds them*. With this idea, many of you are already familiar; for you have read in your Bibles, "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father *feedeth them*." Mark vi. 26.

This heavenly care does not extend merely to the birds now living, but extends also to the development and growth of those which are to come. Means are provided for the continuance of every species; so that when the individuals we now see have passed away, their place may be supplied by others. Before the eggs, from which the young are to come, are laid, the birds, as you know, make ready their nests. You find some of these nests about our houses, some in our hedges, some on the tops of our highest trees, and some on the ground in our meadows and fields. You find them also different in their size and shape, and made of many different materials. But take one of those which is the most common; and try if *you* can fix a little clay, and straw, and moss, and feathers, into the same perfect kind of structure; and you will soon find that, although you have ten fingers to work with, you are sad bunglers compared with the little bird. On this subject I may use the words of one of our poets:—

“ It wins my admiration,
To view the structure of that little work,
A bird's nest. Mark it well, within, without,
No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut,
No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,
No glue to join—his little beak was all:
And yet, how neatly finished!”

From the nest, let me now turn your attention to the egg. If I take the egg with which you are most familiar—if I take that of the common hen, and ask any child what is inside of it, the answer would be, “yolk and white.” But if it be placed for three weeks under the hen, what do we then find in it? Not the white and the yolk, but a living bird, just ready to break the shell, and to come forth. The yolk and the white have altogether disappeared; part of them have gone to form the bones of the young chicken, part to form its flesh and its blood, and other portions have been changed into beak, claws, and feathers. Is not this very wonderful? Does it not show that the egg must, from the very first, have been so made as to be capable of producing the young bird?

Nor is this all: the unfledged and helpless young would perish, did not the parents exert new energies in supplying them with food, and exhibit fresh wiles and courage in their defence. You all know how the timid and peaceful hen will fly at any one whom she thinks likely to do injury to her young. Her kindness and care, you have all witnessed; and you have seen with what affection she collects them about her, and spreads over them the shelter of her wings. This circumstance, common as it may appear, our blessed Saviour has employed for the purpose of illustration, in a well-known passage: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, *even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings*, and ye would not!” Matt. xxiii. 37.

The presiding care of the GREAT POWER, which called them into existence, does not terminate even here. It ever continues, and extends over every individual of all the feathered tribes,—even over those which we might regard as the most common and worthless. For this fact, we have the express declaration of Scripture: “Are not

two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" Matt. x. 29. Or, as it is elsewhere given: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?" Luke xii. 6.

When we consider all these things about birds — when we remember that God made them — that He clothes them, feeds them, provides for the continuance of the several kinds, and watches over them — it is surely *your duty* to treat them with kindness and forbearance. I hope, therefore, that none of the children I now address will ever destroy the eggs, or injure the young, or torment the parent birds, or wilfully subject them to needless pain.

REVIEW.

Three Arguments in Defence of the Recent Attacks on the Congregational Property of Unitarians Considered. By CLASSON PORTER, Minister of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Larne. Belfast: Greer, High-street. Pp. 33, 8vo.

THIS pamphlet is the substance of three sermons, preached by the author to his congregation, on the absorbing topic of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and is published by request. The following are the three arguments which it considers:—1. That our Congregational Properties are Trinitarian trusts. 2. That our forefathers were Trinitarians, and therefore we must continue the same, or give up the meeting-houses which they founded. 3. The illegality of Unitarianism before 1813.

The first argument Mr. Porter proves to be a false assertion; and in dealing with it, thus happily vindicates the principles and practice of our ancestors.

"In the vast majority of cases (I believe I may say, in all Irish cases), our Meeting-houses are *not* 'Trinitarian Trusts, founded by Trinitarians, for the avowed purpose of supporting Trinitarian worship.' In many instances, they are not held on trust, at all. In still more numerous cases, there is every reason to believe, that the original founders of them were not, in reality, Trinitarians; and in no case, within my knowledge, is the profession or preaching of Trinitarian doctrines made indispensable towards their continued legal possession. They are, I believe, universally (at least, such of them as are held by trust, at all), held by what are called 'Open Trusts;' i. e. trusts in which no peculiar religious doc-

trines are mentioned, as being the doctrines which, alone, in all future ages, are to be preached within their walls, on pain of any omission, in this respect, being attended with the loss of the property demised. This latter plan, indeed, the bigotry of modern times has not failed to discover and adopt. But it was not known to, or, at least, it was not practised by, *our* fathers. *They* scorned the meanness of endeavouring, by any such method, to tie up the eyes, to sew up the mouths, and close up the understandings, of future generations. Our fathers were genuine Protestants. They judged for themselves, in matters of religion; and they despised the inconsistency of doing anything which should prevent their descendants from adopting a similar course of conduct. They never dreamed of providing, by their wills or trust deeds, that, throughout all time, fetters should be kept in the porches of their Meeting-houses, and that these fetters should be put on by each successive race of Ministers and worshippers, before they were to be allowed to enter the body of the sanctuary, and there to 'worship, and bow down, and kneel before the Lord their Maker.' No, they built their Meeting-houses, plainly and simply (as most of them have expressed it, in the legal documents by which they are held) for the 'worship of Almighty God, for ever.' How forcible are the words!! How much do they say; but how much do they leave unsaid!! 'The worship of God, for ever'—Yes, the worship of *God*; not the worship of 'the Holy and Blessed Trinity, three Persons in one God;' but, purely and simply, the worship of 'God, for ever.'"

The second argument Mr. Porter admits is true in its assertion, but shows to be false in the inference. Our ancestors were Trinitarians, but the religious liberty which they bequeathed to their descendants did not bind them to hold the same opinions, in peril of being ejected from our meeting-houses, and stripped of our congregational property.

"To what practical purpose," asks Mr. Porter, "would our ancestors have secured for us permission to search the sacred Scriptures, if so soon as, in consequence of that search, we were led to deviate, in some respects, from their own favourite doctrines, we were forthwith to be deprived of our Congregational property, and thrust out of our Houses of Prayer? Did they deliver us from *one* thralldom, only to subject us to *another*? Did they throw down the prison walls of Rome, only to let us see, that, at a very little distance beyond them, were the barriers of Geneva, which we were not to presume to pass? No; never shall we allow this monstrous libel to be uttered against our fathers. They knocked the fetters from our limbs; but they did so with the intention that we should roam at large through the pastures of divine grace, and not that we should be tethered, for all ages,

amongst the rank grass that covers the marshes of Calvinism. They left us, therefore, our Congregational independence."

The third argument Mr. Porter shows to be "good law" but bad morality, and the pamphlet concludes with a brief notice of the several clauses of that Bill which has placed us beyond the reach of those who meditated the spoliation of our religious property.

Popular Objections against Unitarianism. By GEORGE LEE.
London: J. Chapman. Pp. 16.

The object of this tract is to meet some of the principal objections that are made to "the sect everywhere spoken against;" and the author has in a brief space, exposed the fallacies on which these objections rest. He shows that we do not set up fallible reason against God's inspired word; that we do not degrade him whom "God has exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour;" that we do not make good works the basis of salvation, instead of the grace of God; that in preaching morality, we do not neglect religion, for religion and morality are necessarily united; and that the small number of its professors affords no argument against the truth of the Unitarian doctrine. We admire the earnest, pious, practical spirit which pervades this tract.

A Catechism of the Life of Christ, for Families and Schools.
London: J. Chapman. Pp. 79.

This catechism presents the history of our Lord according to the harmony of Dr. Carpenter; and contains explanations of various passages in the gospels, as they arise, and illustrations of Christian duties. Where it may not be convenient to introduce it as a class-book, it may be found useful to teachers, as it contains much information in few words. And the authoress has prepared it "with the hope of lessening a difficulty which must be felt by every teacher, that of impressing on the minds of children the succession and connexion of the events of our Saviour's life and ministry."

INTELLIGENCE.

BURY AND STAND SUNDAY-SCHOOL FESTIVAL.

ON the Friday of Whitsun-week, a most interesting meeting of the Bury and Stand Sunday schools took place in a field, near Bury, belonging to Mr. Grundy, of Park-hills. The two schools walked in procession to the place of meeting, the party from Stand being accompanied by the Revds. P. P. Carpenter (minister of the place), J. K. Montgomery, of Belfast, and Francis Bishop, of Warrington; and that from Bury, by the Rev. F. Howorth, and several ladies and gentlemen of his congregation. The arrangement as to time had been so well planned, that the two assemblages were for some time visible to each other as they approached from opposite directions the scene of their intended gathering; and when they met, just by the entrance to the field, the Stand children greeted their Bury friends with three hearty cheers. On their arrival in the field, the whole party, which now comprised about five hundred children, and one hundred adults, gathered round a cart, which served as a platform for the ministers present to address them from. After some observations from Mr. Howorth, Mr. Carpenter gave out a hymn which was sung in alternate verses by the boys and girls, the whole joining in the words below, which formed the chorus at the end of each verse. The scene at this time was most enlivening and beautiful. The field was delightfully situated, forming part of a plain, bounded in the distance, on every side, by pleasant hills; and to hear, amid the bright and joyous scenes of nature, so many happy voices singing in sweet accord—

“We’re all brothers, sisters, brothers—

We’re all brothers, and Heaven is our home,”

was indeed a privilege which few who enjoyed it will ever forget. After the children had partaken of the refreshments provided for them, they engaged in various amusements. In the course of the afternoon, a balloon which had been prepared by some of the teachers, was sent up amid the shouts of the juvenile assemblage. Delightfully did the time pass away, till the shades of evening were drawing on, when the children again assembled as above, and sung: “Here we meet to part again,” &c. after which they were addressed by Mr. Bishop and Mr. Montgomery. One of the latter speakers, observing a number of the children wearing temperance medals, called upon all who were teetotallers to hold up their hands, when the hands of about three-fourths present were immediately uplifted. This led to three cheers for Father Matthew. Sundry other cheers for parties present and absent were given, and at about nine o’clock the two schools left the field in procession towards their respective homes. Thus ended a day of unalloyed enjoyment to young and old, and on which all may look back with interest and delight.

JOSEPH BARKER.

Having been engaged for some weeks at Newcastle, I considered it my duty to become acquainted with the religious "movement" in that neighbourhood, headed by Rev. J. Barker. Mr. Barker is a remarkable man, of great mental and physical powers, which he is successfully devoting to the cause of religion. He is a decided Unitarian, and is daily making converts to Unitarianism, although he refuses to adopt any other name than that of "Christian." He was formerly the most popular minister among the Wesleyan Methodists of the new connexion, but was obliged to leave that body in consequence of having changed his opinions. At present he is engaged in business, and receives no salary for preaching—in fact he objects to that mode of remunerating Christian ministers. His labours, however, as preacher and lecturer are incessant, being engaged almost every evening of the week days, and several times every Sunday. "Chapel and wayside," as Mr. Harris remarks, "market-place and square, are to him equally eligible, so that souls may be won from error and sinfulness, and brought under the power and purity of the cross." He has established Christian churches at different places in the north of England, which he occasionally visits; and his missionary excursions (in one of which he is just now engaged) sometimes keep him from home for a month together. During my stay in Newcastle, I heard him address crowded meetings on several occasions. At one meeting of nearly 2,000 persons, called to discuss the merits of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and at which a petition was signed in its favour, he spoke with great power for above two hours and a half. I also heard several of his disciples (for he has many preachers belonging to his churches at Newcastle and other places), and they delivered excellent Unitarian addresses with all the fervour and freshness of new converts to a good cause. I attended several of his "Church meetings;" and at his request, on a Sunday evening, I lectured to his people in the large room in Nelson-street, where he usually preaches; the congregation on that occasion consisting of at least 1,200. Many of his disciples also attended at the Unitarian chapel when I preached there.

Mr. Barker's business, which he has had to acquire under disadvantageous circumstances since he became a Unitarian, is that of a printer. He is publishing an edition of Channing's entire works, cheaper than any which has yet appeared; viz. in penny numbers and shilling volumes—one neat volume printed in clear and good type, being now complete; also a penny periodical, called the "*Christian*;" and many useful tracts, written by himself and others.

JOSEPH BATEMAN.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The American Unitarian Association held its Nineteenth Anniversary at the Berry-street Church, Boston, on Tuesday evening, May 28, the chair being taken by Mr. Justice STORY, President

of the Association. Prayer was offered by the Rev. E. B. Hall, of Providence, R. I. when the business of the Meeting was opened by some remarks of the President, in which he congratulated his associates upon the happy position in which their body now found itself. Twenty years ago, he helped to organize it under the venerable and good Dr. Bancroft, now no more: we were then feeble and few, and almost unknown to each other; but since then, much has been done; valuable associations have been formed. It has softened much of the bigotry and prejudices that used to exist against us, and helped to produce a more candid spirit among the various sects. By the blessing of God we have been prospered. He called the zeal and enterprise of his brethren to the present duties, pressing upon them under the existing circumstances of religious opinion and inquiry. Dogmas and doctrines, said he, were now abroad, directly opposed, in his judgment, to the spirit and principles of the Reformation, and which may require us to fight over again the battles of Luther, and vindicate, against aggression, even now and here, the great ideas of Protestantism. Judge Story referred to its two prominent and distinctive opinions; first, The right of private judgment,—which can never be waived without yielding our intellectual independence. Secondly, to that so well stated by Chillingworth, namely, “The Bible, and the Bible only, as the religion of Protestants.” Two dogmas are now prevailing around us, which Protestantism must for ever resist. The one is Tradition, as a means of interpretation, and not only that, but as a part of Christianity itself; the other is the dogma, that there can be no church without a bishop.

Rev. C. Briggs, General Secretary, read the annual Report. The want of more missionaries and tracts was strongly urged, and the delight with which our views are received by many minds, tired and sickened and discouraged by the mysteries and contradictions of the prevailing forms of theology. Sixty thousand monthly publications of the Association had been issued to subscribers during the past year; and it was intended by the Executive Committee to furnish a series of cheaper tracts than heretofore, in addition to the others. The call for tracts was very great. Eighteen new auxiliary societies have been formed during the year,—nineteen life members added. The whole number of members is now over five thousand, of whom over four hundred are members for life. The missionary labours in the West were particularly alluded to. More young men are needed to enter upon the work of the ministry; and the Report mentioned with high praise and satisfaction, the efforts of H. J. Huidekoper, Esq. of Meadvale, Penn.; and of his son, Rev. Frederick Huidekoper, by which a divinity school had been established in that town. Fifteen names or more were now entered as pupils, and the project was one in which the Association could not have too deep an interest. The West needed it, and it was an omen of joy.

The meeting was then addressed by various speakers.

Rev. J. Whitman said; that, talking with a Presbyterian minis-

ter once, it was insisted that a creed was imperatively needed to preserve the union of the church. That very week the Presbyterian church of this country was split in two, by a controversy about the meaning of its creed. He said that every person, in joining a church, ought to be allowed his own convictions free and undisturbed. That was his own way; he had told one, who wished to unite in his church, but stated that there was an obstacle, in his differing in opinion in some matter, from the doctrine he had heard in the pulpit, that the Bible was open to the member as to the minister,—that the source of the Truth was a common one to both, and that the convictions of each were sacred. Laymen, he urged, should be left to go immediately to Christ: there should be none to stand between them and their Master. They can have no true interest in Christianity, unless they feel this. And this must be the ground of our prosperity. He concluded with an expression of his joy at the new activity of our laymen, declaring that, though we have ministers, we have no priesthood, and that as brethren together, our united and individual cry should be,—“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”

The Hon. Stephen Fairbanks, Treasurer of the Mission Fund, in speaking of the mission fund, stated that the original design was to raise ten thousand dollars per annum, for five consecutive years. The amount collected from various societies and individuals has exceeded, a little, the sum that was at first contemplated, being ten thousand and ninety-two dollars and forty-three cents. The collections towards the fund for the present year already received, amount to two thousand one hundred and forty dollars. He said, that he had found, upon inquiry, that this movement had not diminished the donations to our other associations, unless that a slight falling off in one of them might be attributed to that cause.

Rev. James F. Clarke, of Boston, said—We want to make Christians, not mere Unitarians. And yet, said he, I value opinions. For every honest man must have definite conceptions, and those conceptions are opinions. But a missionary must have a higher purpose than to make proselytes to opinions. He must go, not to oppose dogmas, but to convert men to God. He need not argue about total depravity, but he must speak to men as sinners: he must assure them that they cannot serve two masters; that they must be for Christ or against him; and make them *feel* it. I believe that a Unitarian can do it better than another; for he need not be diverted from his object; he can appeal directly to the heart of every man, without having objections and questions to meet, growing out of the mysteries and difficulties of contradictory opinions. We make a great mistake, when we aim at producing merely speculative believers. We have great advantages in preaching the pure gospel. Other sects have energy, judgment, wisdom, skill, vast and powerful machinery. But their difficulty is in going straight to the soul and conscious experience of man. They are like people who should contrive a wonderful, ingenious, and complicated piece of mechanism, to make water run up a hill.

Let us apply ourselves to assisting it in its natural course, till we make the whole world to become the fertile garden of the Lord.

The Rev. C. Brooks spoke of the condition of Christianity in France, and especially in Paris—I am happy to say that Christianity has begun to take hold of France. There are twenty-three Protestant societies in Paris, and such societies are also found in all parts of the kingdom. The Roman Catholic parish church, in the centre of the city of Paris, into which I saw the remains of our good La Fayette carried, just ten years ago to day, was transformed into a Protestant church about eighteen months since, and it is exactly one year since I worshipped in it with a large congregation. Protestantism has introduced a new and true theology. Benjamin Constant, the great Cuvier, De Gerando, Cousin, Jouffroy, Garnier, Simon, and such men, have displaced infidelity in many leading minds, and enthroned Christianity in its stead. The King and his sons are supposed to be Protestants; but of this I am not sure; yet I am sure that the Duchess of Orleans, the mother of the present heir apparent to the throne, is an avowed and strenuous Protestant. Mr. Guizot, the real head of the government, is a Protestant, and has written in its defence. These examples, among the most intellectual men in the nation, are producing the happiest results. The freedom of inquiry, characteristic of the French, led some students to look beyond a traditional faith; and being aided by the ripe scholars of the once Calvinistic, but now Unitarian Geneva, they came to see the pure and seminal truths of Christianity. For the last ten or fifteen years, these ennobling and expansive views of religion have gradually spread among the people; till now, in the "Reformed Church of Paris," there are several of the most gifted minds who are Unitarians, though they do not allow that name, but rank themselves under the term of "Modern Orthodoxy." They established a weekly newspaper, and have valiantly fought for the truth as it is in Jesus: fought, I say; for, no sooner had they proclaimed their liberal views, than the Calvinists rushed upon them with all the fury of French troops hot for the onset. The pastors, Cuvier, Coquerell, Martin, Montoudon, Poulan, and such Christian heroes, stood firm, and all the fiery darts of the wicked, could not penetrate their shield of faith. The churches where the Calvinistic preachers officiate, are thin enough; while those where the liberal Christians preach, are crowded to excess. At the beginning of each year, a programme of all the services in the associated churches is published and distributed, gratis, among the congregations, enabling each one to know where and when each clergyman officiates. For the last two years, I was obliged to go with my family half an hour, and oftentimes an hour, before the services commenced, in order to secure a good seat; all seats being free. The Protestant churches of France are just now going through the same warfare of sects which divided the Unitarians and Calvinists of Boston twenty-five years ago, and with the prospect of the same happy results to pure Christianity. The most eloquent

pulpit orator in France, is the leader of the freedom party, and he has many supporters among the scholars and nobility. Since his avowal and defence of liberal Christianity, he has been appointed by the King to the place of public Christian instruction, in one of the Royal Universities of Paris. The views of God, of Christ, of man, and of immortality, which he advocates, find a warm response from the best thinkers. They meet the wants of an intelligent and enthusiastic people, and they promise to be the regenerating spirit of God to thousands and thousands of souls; and I believe Paris is more likely to become Unitarian than any city in Europe.

The house was full to excess, never having been before so completely crowded on a similar occasion.

On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the 29th, 30th, and 31st of May, a discussion of the utmost interest was carried on by the Association, on the subject of Slavery; and it resulted in the adoption, on Friday evening, of a series of Resolutions, of which the principal is the following:—

“That, viewing the institution of Slavery in the light of Christianity, we cannot fail to perceive that it conflicts with the natural rights of human beings, as the equal children of a common Father, and that it subverts the fundamental principles of Christian brotherhood.”

THE DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL.

This Bill, which we may call our Bill of Rights, has at length obtained the royal assent. We mean to publish it at length in our next number, that thus our readers may preserve a document so interesting to our denomination, and so important in the history of religious liberty. We are glad to observe, that, at the late meeting of Non-subscribing Presbyterians in Dublin, it was resolved, in connexion with this subject, that Sunday, August 25th, be observed as a day of special thanksgiving; and we trust that the occasion will be used to enforce the great principles of truth, Freedom, and charity. Let us hope that the discord and strife, which unjust aggressions on our religious property engendered, shall now cease, and that the efforts of our church shall be zealously directed to the promotion of pure and undefiled religion.

OBITUARY.

DIED—At her house in Ballystockart, near Comber, on the 18th May last, aged 70 years, Mrs. DAVIDSON, wife of Mr. WILLIAM DAVIDSON, and mother of the Rev. DAVID DAVIDSON, late of London. She was a firm, consistent, and zealous Unitarian; and throughout a long period of weakness and gradual decline, she proved by a constant study of the Scriptures, by resignation to the Divine will, and an abiding confidence in the promises of her Saviour, that this simple faith is all-sufficient for the believer in sickness as in health, in life, or on the approach of death.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. IX.

SEPTEMBER, 1844.

VOL. VI.

WHAT SHALL WE DO TO EXTEND OUR FAITH?

By the kind protection of the legislature, our church has been rescued from persecutions that seemed to threaten its ruin; and the inquiry of many is, what shall we do to celebrate the mighty deliverance that has been achieved? The question is a natural and proper one, and its answer is found in the public meetings that are held in many places, for the purposes of mutual congratulation, and of passing votes of thanks to those distinguished individuals who generously supported our glorious Bill of Rights; and a more suitable answer to the same query is found in the resolution of our church, to keep the twenty-fifth day of August, as a day of special religious exercises and thanksgiving.

But another question presses itself on our attention. The faith which we have cherished, despite of reproach and condemnation, and to which perhaps that very opposition which has driven away the timid and the vain, has wedded us more closely,—this faith has now obtained the protection of the legislature. We are now placed in the secure possession of our houses of worship and other religious property, and we conceive, that the anxious inquiry of each should be, How shall we extend our Faith? Believing as we do, that it tends to vindicate the Bible from the assaults of infidelity, to harmonize the revelations of God's word with the teachings of nature, to strip religion of that by which it is so often disfigured, and to extend the kingdom of holiness and charity, we are anxious that it should be more extensively known, and more widely embraced. We do not think that the mere profession of Unitarianism, if more generally held, would do anything for the improvement of society, or the pro-

motion of human happiness; but we are fully satisfied, that the elevating views which it sets forth of God's unity and paternal character; of the nature of sin, and the means of redemption from it; of the necessity of holiness and value of universal charity, would do much wherever they might be received, to diminish that bitter sectarianism, which is alike the plague and the disgrace of our country, to cherish the graces that should adorn the Christian character, and thus essentially and rapidly promote the kingdom of God.

The views of religion which we entertain, we believe to be the precious and sanctifying truth of God; we have received it, as we humbly believe, from his word, and we are responsible to him first for its application to our own heart and life, and then for its extension to others. Had we been more diligent and faithful in the personal application of our doctrines, there is reason to believe that we would have been more faithful stewards of the word committed to us, and we would have laboured more zealously and perseveringly for its spread and establishment around us. We look to the past, and how little has been accomplished—or, rather, how little has been attempted—for the success of such labours is with a higher power? How little has been attempted in these countries, and how very little in Ireland? We are ready to admit that many a plausible scheme has been concocted, many a flourishing speech has been made; many an important resolution has been passed; but very little has been done. The Irish Unitarian Society has been in existence for years, but it has been comparatively inoperative; and we believe, has only been sustained by the untiring energy of a few devoted minds which no apathy could chill, while it bears a national title to which neither its subscriptions nor its labours give it any title. The Belfast society was organized about thirteen years ago, and its first meeting gave omen of a most efficient and useful institution; but it speedily sunk into a torpor, from which it was only roused by the extraordinary zeal and most laudable exertions of a few laymen, chiefly very young, who felt a strong anxiety to remove the ignorance, and thereby dissipate the prejudice that exists respecting our views of Christian truth.

It may be deemed injudicious thus to reflect on the past, and it may be alleged in extenuation or defence of

that which we blame, that many difficulties surrounded our church, and to the removal of these, the labours and anxieties of her members and people were devoted. Be it so; that time is now past. We have no longer such difficulties to combat, or such fears to alarm us. What shall we now do to extend our Faith? In seeking an answer to this question, we have turned to America; there we have a happy illustration of what united, zealous, and religious effort can do to extend the truth, against opposition, we believe, as violent, and prejudice as strong, as that which we have encountered. Our brethren there have not only borne up, but pushed on, and in the course of fourteen years, they have largely extended the bounds of their church, and added the most important contributions that have been recently made to our religious literature. In the labours which they have carried on, and the success they have obtained, they seem to acknowledge the American Unitarian Association as the most important instrumentality; it has formed a bond of union, supplied practical as well as doctrinal tracts in a monthly series, suited to the country and the times; contributed to the support of weak congregations, and the formation of new ones; and sent out missionaries, to preach in many places "the faith once delivered to the saints." This association has been zealously sustained by the clergy and the laity; and the most distinguished members of the church in that country have been its warmest supporters. From year to year it seems to have gathered strength—the last annual meeting appears to have been the most numerously attended; the contributions also towards its objects were the largest, amounting to about £2,000; and the "collation," of which an abridged report will be found in our present number, fully proves the lively interest which is taken in the society, and in the cause which it advocates, by the laity of all ranks and of both sexes.

. What shall we do to extend our Faith? It seems reasonable to expect, that an organization, similar to that which has succeeded in America, might be found useful here. Making all allowance for a difference of circumstances—and that is, perhaps, very considerable—we believe, that an association for the advocacy and extension of our doctrines, by the circulation of suitable tracts, and the labours of missionaries, would accomplish much good.

At home it is needed, not to stir up strife in peaceable neighbourhoods, or unnecessarily to offend the prejudices of those who differ from us; but to speak the truth in love; to minister to the religious wants of those who hold our opinions; and to make those opinions known where there may be a disposition to inquire. At home, such an association might be useful in this way, as well as in cherishing and instructing those who are of our own household of faith; and from Canada a strong appeal has been made to us; there, there is a want felt for religious instruction, which we are invited, nay, besought to impart — and we are bound to give it. A letter, setting forth the desirableness and the duty of sending missionaries to that country, was read at the late meeting of the Remonstrant Synod in Dublin; but we conceive that that Synod can do nothing in the matter, for it is merely a Non-subscribing body, while this is a demand for Unitarian preaching. Where can such a letter be considered, and its request responded to, but in a Unitarian association? Missionary exertions on the part of a Non-subscribing body, must be restricted to emancipation from human creeds: and hence the Home Mission of that Synod has done little, and is doing less. For the extension of our Faith, we need something more than our Synods and Triennial meetings, which are only designed for ecclesiastical purposes; and which, by the terms of their constitution, seem to exclude all measures for the support and extension of particular doctrinal views; we need, in short, something like the American Unitarian Association.

In suggesting the formation of such a society, we are not forgetful of the labours of those who laudably resuscitated, and who have zealously sustained the Belfast Unitarian Society: they have done what they could; and when we consider their other engagements, and the little encouragement they have received, we are disposed to think that they have done much; but that Society, as it exists at present, is not suited to our wants; its funds are miserably small, and scarcely a pound from any congregation beyond Belfast; its committee numbers scarcely one of the elder members of our church, whose counsel would be so valuable; and scarcely more than two or three of our ministers take anything to do with it. We

want a society — this society perhaps remodelled, retaining its present efficient committee—which shall include among its managers, a portion of the clergy and elders of our church, and embody the zeal and energy which recent events have tended to quicken amongst us. Such an institution, if based on proper principles, and conducted in a spirit of piety, love, and zeal, would be the noblest testimonial we could rear, to celebrate the achievement of our religious freedom; while it would probably be an efficient means, under the divine blessing, of extending our Faith.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PASSING OF THE DIS- SENTERS' CHAPELS BILL:

BEING PART OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED ON ITS RECEIVING
THE ROYAL ASSENT.

On this (the first Lord's day after the Dissenters' Chapels Bill having passed through all its stages in Parliament, and having even, as I am now informed, received the final sanction of our Gracious Sovereign, so as to have become the law of the land), it may not be out of place, or, rather, it may naturally be expected, that I should make some allusion to an event, of so much importance to our future peace, and forming so prominent an era in the history of Religious Toleration. I will, therefore, offer a few reflections that occur to me on this subject; premising one remark, that the nature of this subject itself brings us into closer contact with political transactions and characters, than it is our usage to admit.

I consider this measure, from first to last, in all its progress, highly honourable to those who are at the head of the political affairs of this country; and I do not consider that the determination, however fixed, of avoiding all political allusions or reference, should prevent us from giving our full meed of praise to a sense of justice prevailing over a sense of interest: and that when those, whom the constitution invests with the highest influence in such concerns, have exhibited a conduct that would, in ordinary affairs, be looked upon as so magnanimous — when they have sunk the consideration of all political and all religious distinctions — to support the weak against

the machinations of the strong, and to rescue those who in at least a large majority of cases, are politically opposed to them, from a wasteful expenditure of their money and their time in defending property, so dear to them, from a systematic and apparently concerted scheme of plunder, and that, too, when they might have rested satisfied with the plea that the Courts of Equity would equitably decide, and that they would not interfere with the course of justice—when this is the case; we could not, I think, commend a scrupulosity that would withhold, or niggardly bestow a praise so justly earned, by a conduct so praiseworthy in the sight of God and man.

I place, then, the Government of the country first in order; because they had, in the first instance, to determine whether any step would be taken or not;—they had to originate the business; and we all know that this is a more trying situation, than to aid in a measure that has been once commenced.

I think it highly honourable to the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It was into the House of Peers that it was first introduced. You need not be told how common the expectation is, that the high and mighty of the land, reposing themselves under the shadow of a church consisting of titled dignitaries and possessed of vast wealth, should deem unworthy of consideration those who dissent from that church—how usual it once was to treat with ridicule and contempt, all those who resorted to the humble conventicle; and how they were hereditarily countenanced in this by all their historical associations, impressing them with dislike as well as contempt. That these Peers, whom common repute would represent as so much given to pleasure, that they would not attend to such concerns, should both meet in larger numbers, and give a more earnest and sedulous attention, than to almost any measure brought before them during the Session; and more especially, that, after having discharged this duty, and being again called upon by an unrelaxing, importunate, and vexatious opposition, they should so heartily attend, and maintain their former decision, is a conduct that I do not feel ashamed of calling honourable and praiseworthy, even from this place.

Nor do the proceedings of the Commons House of Parliament reflect less credit upon *them*. It is impossible

for you to have any accurate conception of the engines that were set at work to warp and control the members. After vain attempts to have public inflammatory meetings, a committee was organized, combining persons from all the Orthodox Dissenting bodies, who used every exertion throughout the country to have the members interfered with by those of their constituents who were hostile to the Bill. Forms of petition, too, were sent in every direction; and we know that these were signed, without any knowledge of their contents. Numerous instances have occurred, when this has been confessed: So general and so successful was the misrepresentation of the nature and objects of the Bill, that even the Bishop of Norwich came forward at the last debate, and admitted for himself, and many of the clergy and laity of his church, that he had been led into a wrong conception of the whole tenour of the Bill, and had therefore intended to oppose it; but that he would support it, now that he saw its real nature and purport.

By such and similar means, vast multitudes of signatures were procured to petitions. It was thought that they would overwhelm the Bill. And so they would have done; had not the plain and obvious justice of our cause counteracted their influence; and had it not been apparent that *religious* enmity was at the foundation of them all; and that the argument, from the sacred nature of religious trusts which they advanced, was at best a fallacy, if not wilful sophistry. We know that persons of distinguished talents had been for a time misled by these misrepresentations; but that, to their great credit, they abandoned their opposition when the true nature of the case was laid open before them. In the face of all these threats, of being ever after excluded from that House, in which they were going to support this measure, manfully and unshrinkingly did all the leading members of the House *not* give a silent vote, but speak most boldly and eloquently in its defence; and many others were prevented from doing so merely by the lateness of the hour, and the uselessness of supporting by argument, what there was no argument to oppose. And not the least valuable result of the discussion, was the admission on *all* sides, even by the leader of the opposition to it; that the House of Commons of the United Kingdom was not

the proper theatre for religious controversy; and that none such should be there entertained.

Another source of satisfaction is, that there can be no charge of premature haste—of being taken by surprise—of being kept in ignorance that such a measure was in agitation. It was known for more than a twelvemonth. It was admitted by a leader among the opponents twelve months before, that the Dissenting body of England was aware, and ready to quash all attempts at gaining such a Bill.

The Chancellor, from the first to the last, gave full time; and over and over again postponed the consideration when time was asked for: so did the minister in the House of Commons. And when the sense of the two Houses was ascertained more unequivocally and decidedly than on almost any measure during the Session, another delay was interposed, to enable the opponents to complete their organization—take advantage of various circumstances unfavourable to our cause, and endeavour to apply an unusual expedient, for the purpose of indirectly thwarting, what they could not, in fair opposition, withstand.

With respect to that fallacy which formed their only appearance of argument, I need hardly say much. It is indeed painful to say part of what truth compels. But I cannot advert without sorrow any more than without reprehension, to that sanctimonious cry that has been raised about violating the wishes of the dead,—the holy purposes of the founders of our trusts. That such language should be held in this country, is very surprising. That any should so attempt to delude the public mind, is only less extraordinary, than that any Presbyterian people should exist in this country, who did not know and feel that our congregational tenures are totally different from all foundations and trusts, properly so called. Who does not know that the worshipping societies of all denominations, here take their properties in their collective capacity as congregations; that, when settling upon an estate, they naturally expect to have a place for the worship of Almighty God; and that this is looked for whether their landlord agree with them in sentiment or not, and given by him for their accommodation, without regard to any coincidence of opinion. Who does not know that the trustees are

merely nominal—to fulfil what the forms of law require; and that there is hardly a member of any congregation, who could name the trustees of their property? Who does not know, that the congregations consider that the property is their own—to be enjoyed, preserved, and improved by them; and that every successive congregation, from year to year, from generation to generation, has as absolute a control as the first congregation that took the lease; and that the very same right of approving and appointing their own pastor, is to be enjoyed by their successors as by themselves?

We have had hitherto to dwell on what is pleasing and satisfactory. This that I have mentioned is one of those alloys that we must always look for in human affairs; and we may apologize for this allegation of an argument so weak, by the ordinary weakness of the human mind; which makes us, in our extremity, so often cling to an argument brittle as straw. But no such apology can be made for repeated asseverations of fraudulent intent and dishonest practices on our part, in holding these properties. That these should be not only insinuated, but broadly and repeatedly asserted, might indeed justly call for indignant reproof; but shall only be met with pity for human infirmity, or contempt for desperate and inveterate malice.

What shall we say of the self-inconsistency of the Dissenters who opposed this measure? What is the foundation principle of the whole of their dissent? Is it not the right of private judgment? and what were they attempting to accomplish by this opposition? Was it not to extinguish for ever this right in almost all existing churches or congregations? They would have merely changed the instrument that was to bind the judgment and the consciences of men. Instead of the decrees of the Council of Trent,—instead of the Athanasian and Nicene creeds, and so forth, they would have made the inferred opinion of the grantor of the lease, or of the trustees by whom it was held—or of the first worshippers in the house—to be the strict and absolute rule by which the opinions of all who ever after should enter that house, were to be formed, till time should be no more. Supposing the whole authority of Scripture to be shown to be clearly adverse to such opinions,—supposing the universal sense of mankind

to declare against them, not one of such houses could ever be occupied, except by those who unswervingly maintained this original faith of the first worshippers, whose qualifications to judge for all posterity, you may collect from what you know of the state of education and mental culture in those times.

You will observe, my brethren, that I cannot encourage you, nor do I wish to encourage you to look upon this success as any triumph of our religious opinions. We did not ask for any such declaration in our favour. It is not consistent with our fundamental principle to admit, that proceedings of legislative bodies can increase or diminish the power of truth. They can impede the progress of truth, by placing serious impediments in the way of an open profession and maintenance of it. They can, as now, remove obstacles to the free use of our judgments in the interpretation of Scripture, and the worship of Almighty God. But neither *in* the House of Parliament, nor *out* of the House, did those who advocated our cause, and supported our application, pretend to sympathize with us in the opinions which we hold; nor should this consideration abate the satisfaction that we feel,—for we ought to rejoice in this as a comprehensive measure, much more than we should have done, had it been limited to our own particular sect.

It is the striking off of the fetters of the human mind that we should most desire to see, that we should the most rejoice in. It is, that religious truth should be left free to the sound reason and proper feeling of man; that he may take his own conscientious sense of the Divine message, and act upon it; that he may not be forced to take the concentrated errors of any creed, but may choose what there is of truth in one scheme and what in another; and thus think and act on the firm persuasion of his own mind. If we have that confidence that we ought to have in our own views, we should wish for nothing more; and so far as this legislative measure facilitates this, so far it will be found to be actually supporting our views, not because they are ours, but because the advantage of being unchained will ultimately be in favour of the strongest in argument and reason. I say ultimately; for there are other bonds, in which the minds of men are still held—the bonds of prejudice—the influence of an ill name—and the calls of worldly interest.

Another reflection that I would make, is, that we have a still farther inducement to discharge the Christian duty of holding our own opinions in all charity. If we have had provocation, from the unfounded calumnies that have been uttered, we have had reason to be gratified with the sympathy and exertions of those who differ widely in opinion, but fairly and boldly have demanded that we should be redressed of our wrongs, and secured in our rightful possessions.

But, my brethren, there is one feeling, above all, that should occupy our souls, and that will thus be our best security against false glorying or uncharitable boasting — it is that of humble thankfulness to Almighty God. We should be most thankful for that beneficent course of Divine Providence, whereby we are made partakers of this invaluable blessing of liberty. We are not to be so presumptuous, as to arrogate to ourselves any special interference of Providence on our behalf. We are not even to monopolize the liberty thus given, as if it were ours only. It belongs to all; and unwilling though they are to accept it, from the manner in which their thoughts are engrossed with a desire to defeat our claims, it is a liberty most valuable to all, and the reasonableness and value of which, all will some time or other acknowledge. Most thankful, therefore, should we be to Almighty God, that, as all things are working together for some great, wise, and good end, so we have been permitted, in this our day, to experience this, and to exult with all joy of heart, in the expansion of the human mind — the promulgation of more enlightened principles — and the maintenance of the supremacy of conscience in matters of faith and worship.

With all humble thankfulness, let us accept and enjoy this blessing; with all perseverance let us improve it, and may that Gracious Providence, to which we are indebted for all that is good, so order the events of our lives, and of the lives of all who hereafter may worship here, as that all things may redound to his honour and glory — to the extension of his Son's kingdom, in Spirit and in Truth — and to the universal diffusion of that charity which is the consummation of the Christian character here, and will, therefore, best prepare for the happiness of Heaven.

W. B.

THE WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

PART II.

SAUL, the king of Israel, had two daughters, which were each, at different times, promised to David by their father, who treacherously schemed thus to get rid of his rival, by laying him under an obligation to fight his battles with the Philistines. Concerning the elder, Merab, Saul broke his promise to the young warrior, and gave her to another. As we have reason to conclude that ambition, not love, influenced David's desire to become the king's son-in-law, we may suppose he was satisfied with Michal, who became his wife, when he had earned her by a signal and cruel triumph over the foes of Saul.

What have we to say of the character of Michal? We know but this: that she had a heart—that she loved her husband, and defended him with much care and cunning from the vengeance of her father; and more we know, even this—that her affections were outraged;* for her father took her from David, and gave her to Phalti, the son of Laish, which was of Gallim. Truly, the women of ancient days had but a sorry part to play;—bartered from ambition—loved from caprice—or cast away without a cause: uneducated—unhonoured—unfriended. Let them, then, never forget their profound obligations to that Saviour, who had compassion on their low estate.

Abigail, the wife of Nabal, the churl, was a woman of prompt wisdom and discretion. When she was informed of the ungrateful and ungenerous conduct of her husband toward the men of David, she lost not a moment, but used her best endeavour to ward off the misfortunes which such a proceeding must have brought upon her household. David was greatly charmed by her wisdom and her grace; and having, ten days afterwards, heard of the sudden death of her churlish and ill-assorted consort, he sent for Abigail, and took her to wife. The prompt wisdom and discretion shown by Abigail, is no commonplace virtue. The faculty of seeing on the instant the thing that ought to be done, and, despite of all difficulties, making the necessary exertion, is much to be ad-

* See 1 Samuel, chapter xxv. last verse. But how does this accord with chap. vi. of 2 Samuel, from verse 14 to the end, where Michal is spoken of as the wife of David, without any reference to an interruption of their union?

mired and approved. For one who is thus minded, we meet with a thousand, who content themselves with *wishing* they had done wisely; and who prove themselves, the next time they are tried, no better than before. Let us imitate the conduct of Abigail, not only in temporal things, but also in those which shall never pass away. Let us be prompt to humble ourselves before God, and to use the present opportunity with diligence.

Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, was very beautiful; but proved herself wanting in the best charms of a woman—reverence for herself, and fidelity to her husband.

The woman of Tekoah, employed by Joal to awake and ameliorate the king's feelings towards his rebellious son, Absalom, gives us, in her well-feigned story, an example of that love of fable and allegory, so characteristic of the people of the East. Her whole dress and deportment were in unison with her tale; habited in mourning garments, and unanointed, she appeared in the presence of royalty, and related the sad tale of her sons' misfortunes. One she affirmed to have been slain by the hand of his brother; and the survivor pursued by the avenger of blood. Having fully moved the compassion of the unsuspecting king, she artfully turns and makes the application: "And the woman said, wherefore, then, hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? For the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home his banished."

David had before now given proof that he was not a man to harden his heart, and refuse the rebuke applied to his conscience; he therefore, by complying with the implied desire, shows true honour to this tale,—a tale so gracefully related, and so cleverly turned to the fulfilment of the end it had in view.

When Joab, David's chief captain, was about to lay siege to the city of Abel of Bethmachab, and cast a bank against it, a wise woman among the besieged having demanded permission to speak, reasoned with him of the honour in which her city was held, and of the cruelty of what he proposed to do, in these remarkable words: "Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel; and so they ended the matter. I am one of them that are

peaceable and faithful in Israel; thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel; why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?" With these words she prevailed with Joab, who declared unto her the cause of his wrath: "The matter is not so; but a man of Mount Ephraim (Sheba, the son of Bichri by name), hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David; deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall." Thus did this woman, by her prompt wisdom and courage, save her fellow-citizens from the cruel fate of war, and herself, probably, from a lingering death. Some might object, that, for a woman to be thus ready to draw attention to herself, must prove her to have had a forward and unfeminine mind; and that her promptness to deliver up the offender was cruel and ungenerous. For the first objection, we reply, that she was a *mother in Israel*; a woman of age and experience; and had, doubtless, spent a long and useful life amongst her fellow-citizens; and thus purchased for herself the right to interfere for their benefit. And here we may observe, in passing, that that affectation and conventionalism which fear everything, and are in constant slavery to etiquette, can never be expected to act well or wisely on great occasions, which require strong judgment, good courage, and a discerning mind.

The last objection is easily met; as none can doubt, that, to a woman of such a spirit, it must appear more proper that the real offender should perish, than that the whole city should suffer for the defence of a rebel. It may, or it may not have been as painful to her as it would be to most women of the present day, to exact the life even of a criminal; it is very possible that it was not—and that she may not have been sensible that "mercy seasons justice." It is the gospel that teaches us the value of human life, and the proper impulses, and nature of compassion. We do not judge this woman's heart; but we feel that her prompt wisdom and courage well deserved honour and gratitude from her countrymen.

In our notices of Scripture women, the queen of Sheba must not be omitted; she who gave so strong a proof of her love for wisdom, by going herself, to see with her own eyes, whether fame had spoken the truth in the case of

Solomon. She was fully rewarded for her laudable exertions; and having pronounced upon him a warm eulogy, she concluded in the following Scripturous strain: "Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice." The zeal of this royal lady has long been acknowledged worthy of the highest admiration; the Saviour himself mentioned her name with honour: "The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment against this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to see the wisdom of Solomon."

That the wives of Solomon turned away his heart from the Lord, proves nothing against women in general; but demonstrates the sinfulness and inexpediency of the circumstances in which they were placed. Besides, he chose them from amongst the idolatrous nations. *One* irreligious wife has sometimes been sufficient to turn a man's heart from his duty; how, then, could he have expected to hold fast his faith, who *sets no bounds to their number*?

In the woman of Zarephath, what a contrast we find to that character we have had occasion to allude to above, Nabal the husband of Abigail; or, as he was deservedly distinguished, "Nabal the churl." He, in the midst of his selfish surfeiting, became poor; she, in her poverty, became rich. He, though abounding in wealth, refused to supply the present need of men, who had, by their kindness and discretion, laid him under an obligation; she, shared her last morsel with the stranger and the traveller. Now, which was rich in the end? he, whose heart "became as a stone," when he learned, that he had, by his churlishness, made of a friend a powerful enemy; or she, who, having shared the last pittance remaining to herself and her son, found, that in comforting the weary traveller, and supplying his great need, she had entertained a servant of the Lord, who converted her scanty meal into a rich supply? She may be truly counted one of those "who entertained an angel unawares;" for the holy servant of God came heaven-directed to her abode. Who, in the gay world of fashion, was acquainted with even the name of the widow of Zarephath? But Jehovah knew her! Who, at the

court of Jezebel, would have considered this woman worthy of their notice? Which of the butterflies of the day would have been attracted to this lonely flower? Yet God saw her: He had regarded her sustaining faith—her simple heart!

There is one thing admirable in the Word of God, namely, that such small virtues, which pass continually before the eyes of men (they, haply, heeding them not), are there laid up, as in a storehouse, that all who apply, may solace themselves from the vanities of life, and find what it is that God accounteth great; what he hath thought worthy of historical record. Thus we are led to believe, that in a future final judgment, when the mighty powers and fame of the hero, the pomp of the proud, and the grandeur of the vain man, shall have passed away; when the airs of the Beauty shall be all disregarded and forgotten; some small act of love and mercy,—some thought, embodied in a gentle deed, of which no note was taken here, shall be found to have been written with the finger of God in everlasting tablets; and shall be read aloud in the ears of an assembled world!

The story of the widow of Zarephath teaches us, that we should help our neighbour's present distress faithfully; and trust in God's blessing not to let us want. This does not recommend a thoughtless prodigality; but only reproves a hoarding, selfish temper, which some love to indulge. Gratitude, love, blessing,—these await the man who shews consideration for his fellow-creatures; these are the meet rewards of the generous spirit. The selfish heart, let it labour as it may, never becomes rich; whilst the opposite mind is a vessel continually replete—a barrel of meal for daily use! But some may say this is fine talking; yet we cannot do without our daily bread, though we prize the blessing of God, and the favour of good men, as much as any one can do. Do you? Then why not give up somewhat at least of your *vanity* to this good end? Apart from this absorber of your substance, your wants are not so *very many*. They are truly fewer than you suppose; and he who helps his neighbour may remember the words of Scripture: "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." But we are not about to write a sermon, but to suggest this simple truth: That the blessing of God on a kind spirit in every-day life,

makes the little, much; whereas, the grudging and accumulating spirit, loses, not gains, by its want of fidelity.

We are also led to exclaim, whilst we meditate on the story of this woman, How checquered is the path of human life! No sooner have joy and honour found us out in our homes, than sorrow and pain follow quickly, and drive them from the door! We have scarcely finished our thanksgiving, when lo! to try our faith, the change comes; and again, whilst the tear is yet on our cheek, the hand of mercy dries it, e'er it falls! Behold this widow: satisfied with bread, just as she and her household were about to perish from famine; see how she rejoices in her son's renewed strength—the smile is on his lip, and he delights to exert the vigour of his limbs. She says in her heart—the happy mother!—"What a pity it would have been, had that dear child died from want!" But lo! some worm of corruption, even while she is speaking, has begun the work of death! Now, oh! rejoicing mother, where is thy gladness? The light of thine eyes is quenched;—where, oh! where is thy faith? Better, she is ready to exclaim, far better we had died together, when famine frowned darkly on our dwelling, than that I should live to see thee perish in the prime of thy joy and youth! How true to human nature was the thought to which she so quickly gave utterance, namely, that her new-found friend, Elijah,—he in whom her heart had rejoiced, as a blessing sent from heaven,—was, in reality, the cause of all her woe: "And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God; art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" And she talks, too, in the distraction of her grief, of calling *her sin to remembrance*; and we ourselves have heard her judged for these words. We have heard the serious and eloquent preacher denounce her as a sinner; bring her forward as an example of those, who never consider the enormity of their guilt, till sudden affliction tears from their bosom, and brings forward to the light, their long-forgotten, long-hidden vice! Ah! thou bereaved and sorrowing widow, we will not take such an advantage of thy broken heart! Nor have we need. Was it not the custom of the Jews? Was it not the custom of all the nations round about, to consider, in their ignorance of the purifying use of trial, that afflictions were the visi-

tations of an angry Deity? The book of Job remains a lasting record of the fact. Indeed, when the accusations are of our own hearts, the connexion of affliction with the punishment of sin may be said to be a sentiment of human nature. We will not enlarge or insist upon the subject here; having spoken of it once before more fully, in a former treatise.* The prophet did not reproach her as a sinner, but answered her in these words: "Give me thy son." Even when he cried unto Jehovah for her, he spake not of her sins, but pleaded her bitter sorrow: "And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah said: See thy son liveth." Then the happy mother gave utterance to her pious and grateful feelings, in this candid and goodly confession: "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." We must not omit to remark, that our Saviour makes mention of this poor widow. Every reader of the New Testament can witness, that he spake not of her with any dishonour. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land: but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

M. B.

Dublin.

AN APPEAL TO THE CHURCH.

I NEED not trouble myself to show the readers of the *Bible Christian*, that what they regard error and false doctrine, prevail to a lamentable extent in the Church of Christ. They have often lamented their existence; and seemed grieved that they were so crippled and bound down, that they could not make any great exertions in behalf of what they believed was truth. Our chains are at length broken. We are free: and now has arrived the opportunity for exertion. I am glad to observe that our friends are already in the field. Strabane is occu-

* "Simple Thoughts on Psalm xxv. 18," published in a former volume of the *Bible Christian*.

pied: other places are desirous to receive us; and I rejoice that means are being adopted, to afford them an opportunity to hear the word of truth preached in its simplicity, untainted by the corruptions of human inventions. But however zealous those ministers may be, who are to occupy these posts; and however faithfully they may discharge the important duties that will devolve upon them,—how little of the great field which surrounds us—ready for the sickle—will they be able to attend to! Brethren, we must all become missionaries of the gospel. Laity, as well as clergy, must put their shoulder to the wheel,—must proclaim the riches of the Father's love, and the purity of the Saviour's religion. All must, as they value the doctrines of their heavenly faith, labour to disseminate them; and to overthrow the systems of error, which the ignorance and prejudices of men have raised on the foundations of everlasting truth. But let us be cautious as to the means employed. We must speak the truth in love; condemn no man rashly; and above all things, manifest characters which will argue the purity of our system more powerfully than the eloquence of the tongue. What for opinions—what even for truth itself, if our lives are immoral, our hearts corrupt! Oh! that men would contend less about words and speculative opinions, and labour more to exemplify in their lives the precepts and the laws of the gospel of life! Would to God that we could get all churches to give up their man-made articles and creeds, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to make wise unto salvation! - However unpleasant the task, those who receive the Scriptures alone as the rule of their faith, are bound, through honour for the King and Head of the church, to labour to demolish the idols, which man's folly has erected and intruded into the fold of the Son of God. Our own country has the first and strongest claim upon us. At home, we must individually do something. We must also have men qualified for the work, who shall devote the whole of their time in the good cause. To support them, we must make an effort. Let the matter be brought before our churches, and the means will be abundantly supplied. There is one, and, as I believe, the best plan of effecting this, which I hope to see carried into operation,—the increasing of the Rights of Consci-

ence Fund. In a few months, if proper exertions were made, that fund might be augmented by £20,000 or £30,000. One effort would accomplish this: and then we would have means to support a number of missionaries, either at home or abroad. Meantime, to all I would say, Work. Let all—laity and clergy, men and women—become preachers of the Truth; God will bless our exertions, and our labours shall not pass unrewarded.

LAICUS.

30th July, 1844.

A UNITARIAN'S CHARACTER AND DEATH.

(EXTRACT FROM A SERMON BY THE REV. R. E. B. MACLELLAN.)

MY object in this discourse has not been to eulogize the dead, but to improve the living; hence I have been so long in adverting to the late event which has occasioned its delivery. But one can hardly repeat the words, "Let me die the death of the righteous," without having the idea recalled of that old and consistent friend who has recently been removed from amongst us.

There were some points in his character, which demand our peculiar attention, our warmest praise, and our most sedulous imitation.

Perhaps the most striking of these, at the first view, was the exceeding, the unusual, the almost superhuman kindness of his disposition. For nearly half a century, it has not been known that he ever uttered an unkind or ungentle word, nay, that he gave an unkind or ungentle look. Of what other man amongst us can this be said? How often have we, at home and abroad, amid the turmoils of active life, and amid the anxieties of the domestic circle, been induced to think harshly, to feel harshly, to speak harshly, yea, and to act harshly towards those by whom we were surrounded! When the frailties and infirmities of our nature are remembered, when the fever and the fret of life are considered, when the cares of the world, and the toils (not always successful) of providing for ourselves and those dependent upon us, are taken into the account, it would be marvellous, even in the best of men, did they not occasionally let fall some exclamations of weariness, discontent, and irritation, even in the presence of those they love, and whom they would

lay down their lives to benefit. To this marvellous altitude of gentleness our venerable brother had attained. And when we further remember how disease has a tendency to sour the temper even of the kindest, and to produce irritability even in the most composed, and that our friend was for years the prey of sufferings which knew no abatement, and from which there was no hope of release, his unswerving, unvarying gentleness of speech and feeling and demeanour, is found to possess a steadfastness and a sublimity which belong only to the loftiest virtue.

His consistent, unobtrusive, secluded *piety* — a piety known only to those who dwelt continually around him, and from whom, therefore, his habits could not be concealed, must also claim the homage of our approval. He seems to have entered into the full spirit of the injunctions of that Lord whose disciple he was — “But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, which seeth in secret.” His was not the devotion which is characterized by external display, by loudness of voice, or sanctimony of demeanour, or a wild and heated enthusiasm; it was the devotion of home, the devotion of the closet, the devotion of the heart, quiet and calm, and *therefore* deep and unfailing. So constant, so all-pervading was this feeling of dependence on the bounty of his heavenly Father, and of gratitude for the thousand mercies of existence, that no engagements and no amusements were permitted to interfere with his constant practice, even in those years when the imagination is vivid, and the passions ardent, of kneeling down, unseen and alone, to thank and adore the God whom he so loved and trusted.

This depth of rational piety, which had been his companion in the days of youth, and health, and life, did not forsake him in the season of age, and sickness, and death. His sufferings were acute, they endured for years, they were unremitting, yet he was never known to murmur or repine. He knew and felt that he was in the hands of God, that God never afflicts his children but for their advantage, and he firmly believed, in the darkest hour of sorrow, “that the afflictions of a moment should yet work out for him a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory.” Nothing could shake his confidence in God’s love. I am convinced he would have been able to ex-

claim, as truly as did the patriarch, "Yea,—though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Indeed, a sentiment of similar import was ever on his lips. I was anxious to ascertain from so aged and consistent a follower of Christ Jesus the correctness of an opinion I often utter in the pulpit, that the joys of existence far more than counter-balance its evils. In answer to my inquiry, he declared, that many, grievous, and uninterrupted as his sufferings had been, the blessings of his long life had been still more numerous and intense; nay, that he had found reason to consider his lengthened disease as the greatest boon that God had ever bestowed upon him. I never before witnessed under pains so great and so continued, an instance of resignation so perfect, so complete, so evangelical. As might be expected from the course of his life, his departure to another and a better world was tranquil, happy, and full of Christian hope. His was no enthusiasm, no presumption, no deeming that he was a chosen vessel, no thought that he had a monopoly of the favour of God; but the firm hope of immortality, grounded on the resurrection of Christ, and a calm belief that a life of gentleness, honesty, uprightness, love and piety, forms the best passport to the favour of the Eternal. Those who were about him in his last moments, though of a different faith from his own, declare that they never saw a death-bed so happy!

And what, my friends, were the peculiar religious opinions which made this man so good in life, so resigned under affliction, so loving to his kindred, so trustful in his Father, so blessed in the hour of departure? They were those, so often despised, maligned, and hated—those of Christian Unitarianism. Born, bred, and educated in a belief of the Trinity, and the accompanying articles of the popular theology, he saw reason after a long, arduous, and prayerful inquiry, to discard them; and to embrace those which we here profess, teach, expound, and defend. The unity and paternal character of the great First Cause; the essential, infinite, everlasting benevolence of his disposition, the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, the corrective nature of all God's chastisements present and to come, and his intention to raise all his children to ultimate gladness and joy;—these were the principles embraced by the understanding, imbedded in the heart,

and thence influencing the entire life—which made this good man what I have described, which gilded his joys, assuaged his sorrows, strengthened his piety, animated his philanthropy, blessed his death-bed, and I have no doubt, conducted him to heaven. And such is the effect which they must inevitably produce on all who hold them in sincerity, and make them guides of each thought, and word, and feeling, and action.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

GRANDMAMMA'S ROUND TABLE.

GRANDMAMMA'S Round Table was not covered with elegant trifles, and splendid volumes, as they are often to be seen; but was of minute circumference, and upon it lay only one book and her spectacles. Her grandchild, Hannah, had the small occupation of dusting these three articles every morning. One day, rather in heedless mood, the little girl let fall the Bible (the book mentioned), and, in lifting it awkwardly, tore sadly one of the leaves: she was in the room alone, and the thought crossed her mind, "Perhaps grandmamma may not suspect careful Hannah, as she sometimes calls me, but more likely may think it was one of the young children;" she soon found, however, there may be greater suffering, than the mortification of owning our faults,—that of endeavouring, ungenerously, to conceal them: her day was unhappy; and at night, on retiring to rest, she *felt* she could not ask the blessing of God, till she had made known to her grandmamma the mischief she had done. Slowly and ashamed, Hannah returned down stairs, and confessed all. "*Be warned, my child,*" said her grandmother, "*never attempt to deceive, in great things or in small. You should have had more caution, than to injure what you know I so highly value; but oh! how much greater the offence to this Holy Book, had you persisted in departing from that principle of truth, which shines so bright on all its pages.*"

A. B.

July, 1844.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE DISSENTERS' CHAPELS ACT:

AN ACT FOR THE REGULATION OF SUITS RELATING TO MEETING-HOUSES AND OTHER PROPERTY HELD FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES BY PERSONS DISSENTING FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

WHEREAS an Act was passed in the first Session of the first year of the reign of King WILLIAM and Queen MARY, intituled, "An Act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the Penalties of certain Laws:" and whereas an Act was passed in the nineteenth year of the reign of King GEORGE the Third, intituled, "An Act for the further Relief of Protestant Dissenting Ministers and Schoolmasters:" And whereas an Act was passed in the fifty-third year of the reign of King GEORGE the Third, intituled, "An Act to relieve Persons who impugn the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity from certain Penalties:" And whereas an Act was passed by the Parliament of Ireland in the sixth year of the reign of his Majesty King GEORGE the First, intituled, "An Act for exempting the Protestant Dissenters of this Kingdom from certain Penalties to which they are now subject:" And whereas an Act was passed in the fifty-seventh year of the reign of King GEORGE the Third, intituled, "An Act to relieve Persons impugning the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity from certain Penalties in Ireland:" And whereas prior to the passing of the said recited Acts respectively, as well as subsequently thereto, certain Meeting-houses for the worship of God, and Sunday or Day Schools (not being Grammar Schools), and other charitable foundations, were founded or used in England and Wales and Ireland, respectively, for purposes beneficial to persons dissenting from the Church of England and the Church of Ireland, and the United Church of England and Ireland respectively, which were unlawful prior to the passing of those Acts respectively, but which by those Acts respectively were made no longer unlawful: BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED, by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, THAT with respect to the Meeting-houses, Schools, and other charitable foundations so founded or used as aforesaid, and the persons holding or enjoying the benefit thereof respectively, such Acts, and all deeds or documents relating to such charitable foundations, shall be construed as if the said Acts had been in force respectively at the respective times of founding or using such Meeting-houses, Schools, and other charitable foundations as aforesaid.

And be it enacted, That so far as no particular religious doctrines or opinions, or mode of regulating worship, shall on the face of the will, deed, or other instrument declaring the trusts of

any Meeting-house for the worship of God by persons dissenting as aforesaid, either in express terms, or by reference to some book or other document as containing such doctrines or opinions or mode of regulating worship, be required to be taught or observed or be forbidden to be taught or observed therein, the usage for Twenty-Five Years immediately preceding any suit relating to such Meeting-house of the Congregation frequenting the same, shall be taken as conclusive evidence that such religious doctrines or opinions or mode of worship as have for such period been taught or observed in such Meeting-house, may properly be taught or observed in such Meeting-house, and the right or title of the Congregation to hold such Meeting-house, together with any Burial-ground, Sunday or Day School, or Minister's house attached thereto; and any fund for the benefit of such Congregation, or of the Minister or other Officer of such Congregation, or of the Widow of any such Minister, shall not be called in question, on account of the doctrines or opinions or mode of worship so taught or observed in such Meeting-house: Provided nevertheless, That where any such Minister's house, School or Fund as aforesaid shall be given or created by any will, deed, or other instrument, which shall declare in express terms, or by such reference as aforesaid, the particular religious doctrines or opinions, for the promotion of which such Minister's house, School or Fund is intended, then and in every such case such Minister's house, School or Fund shall be applied to the promoting of the doctrines or opinions so specified, any usage of the Congregation to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Provided always, and be it enacted, That nothing herein contained shall affect any judgment, order or decree already pronounced by any Court of Law or Equity; but that in any suit which shall be a suit by information only, and not by bill, and wherein no decree shall have been pronounced, and which may be pending at the time of the passing of this Act, it shall be lawful for any defendant or defendants for whom the provisions of this Act would have afforded a valid defence if such suit had been commenced after the passing of this Act, to apply to the court wherein such suit shall be pending; and such Court is hereby authorized and required upon being satisfied by affidavit or otherwise that such suit is so within the operation of this Act, to make such order therein as shall give such defendant or defendants the benefit of this Act; and in all cases in which any suit now pending shall be stayed or dismissed in consequence of this Act, the costs thereof shall be paid by the defendants, or out of the property in question therein, in such manner as the Court shall direct.

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.—ENTERTAINMENT TO THE MINISTERS IN ATTENDANCE.

Pre-eminently conspicuous among the anniversary celebrations may be ranked the annual Collation given by the Unitarian laymen of Boston, to the clergy of their denomination, on Tuesday, May

28. Whether in point of numbers, or the respectable character of those who participated in it, the harmonious and joyful spirit which prevailed, or the splendid liberality of the entertainment, the festival has never been surpassed by anything of a similar character in this city. The tables were magnificently spread in the immense hall over the depot of the Boston and Worcester Railroad, adorned with a perfect forest of bouquets of every variety, and composed of the richest and most beautiful contributions of Flora. At two o'clock, the company, to the number of nine hundred, took their seats at six tables, ranging from 110 to 130 feet in length, and overlaid with the luxuries of the season. As soon as the company were seated, order was called by the Hon. Jonathan Chapman, who had been invited to preside, and a blessing was invoked on the feast, by the Rev. Mr. Putnam, of Roxbury. After the bountiful repast, thanks were offered up by the Rev. Mr. Robbins, of Boston; and the President then proceeded to address the company in the following appropriate remarks:—

Christian Friends,—I must ask you to bear with me for a few moments, whilst, as the organ of those, at whose instance this overflowing and joyous social gathering has been had, I say a few words of its character and purpose. And as I know that it is the uppermost feeling of the hearts of those whom I represent, I should be faithless to my trust, if I did not make it the first expression of my lips,—“Welcome, a deep and hearty welcome to the whole household of our simple, yet inestimable Christian faith.” We meet to-day under happy auspices. The name of Unitarianism is inscribed upon our banner in plain and legible characters. We are neither ashamed nor afraid to avow it. Though scoffed at and persecuted, as it has been, and though they who embrace it are even now, in some quarters, denied the Christian fellowship—it is a faith we prize and glory in. We believe its doctrines to be true. And what is of far more consequence than all matters of doctrine, we believe its spirit to be that which, if only acted up to by its professors, is the best adapted to conduct rational and immortal beings, through the discipline of earth, towards the perfection of heaven. We pray, therefore, and will labour for its wider diffusion: and the cheering element of our present meeting, is the evidence we have, that our faith is not only spreading in extent, but that its spirit is being more fully felt, and more truly manifested. From every quarter come the glad tidings, that error and prejudice are giving way before intelligence and the true Christian spirit. Our older churches are being inspired with fresh earnestness, and new ones are rising with the rising generation. Here in the East are multiplying the true hearts and the liberal hands. And, brightest omen of all—upon the flowing tide of population that is setting towards the mighty West, there are borne the bold and self-denying pioneers of our faith,—God be with and bless them,—to stand as bright angels at the gates of the Edens that are there to blossom like the rose. This meeting is itself an evidence of the glowing and earnest spirit that is animating us as a sect. Let it

be, then, first and foremost, one of thanksgiving to God, and of congratulation of one another. Our immediate guests to-day are our clergy, our respected and beloved pastors and teachers. We have given them the freest and broadest invitation, and we should rejoice to know that there is not one of them who is not here. Never, I believe, was a more dangerous doctrine advanced,—and not only for our spiritual, but for our temporal interests,—than that the clergy, as a class set apart for the conducting of religious worship, should be dispensed with. We can dispense with our Christian ministers only when we can dispense with the Christian Sabbath and with God's altars,—and when we have advanced so far toward heaven, that we need no church spire to point us thither. Our ministers, I have said, are our guests. But they are not all. If each will turn to her who sits upon his right hand or his left, he will perceive, that we have at least obeyed the commandment which they gave us, at the most interesting occasion of our lives,—"What God hath joined, let not man put asunder." And how otherwise could this scene be complete? This is a Christian social meeting. Its pointed meaning and its moral purpose is to represent the influences of Christianity upon individual and social life. And need I say how imperfect would be any representation of these beautiful and saving influences, in the absence of her who is the presiding genius of home! Yes, Christian brethren, that heaven to which we are permitted to aspire is indeed infinitely above the earth,—as the throne above the footstool. But it has upon the earth two pillars,—the one is planted upon the Christian church, where the priest ministers,—and the other upon the domestic hearth, of which wives and mothers are the vestal guardians, and where they must keep the sacred fire of true religion ever burning, or that upon the outward altars will go out for ever. We are met, then, to exemplify and increase the influence of our religion upon our hearts,—and we are all here,—the priest, the priestess, and the people. It is a family meeting. We are, as it were, around our domestic hearth. We are all at home. There needs but the kindling heart and the speaking voice, and these too are here, I know. We have not come to discuss matters about which we may differ,—but to pour out our hearts in sympathy and brotherly love. We have no formalities, and no appointed speakers. All, all are invited to utter as they feel,—briefly, for we are many, and from the heart, for we would be warmed. And may it be said of our meeting, in the touching lines of Montgomery—

"How beautiful the sight
Of brethren who agree
In friendship to unite,
And bonds of charity.
'Tis like the dews that fill
The cups of Hermon's flowers,
On Zion's fruitful hill,
Bright with the drops of showers."

Several interesting addresses were delivered in the course of the day, from which we have only space for the two following extracts:

The Rev. J. Whitman said,—You have spoken of Unitarianism, Mr. President, and well spoken. We value its doctrines, but only as instruments; wherewith, in Christ, we should make the world free. We would respect adherence to conscience on the part of those who may differ from us. We would, on this occasion, feel that it is only the union of the heart—not of the head—which warms us with Christian love; and the cause we have at heart will go on, if we have it at heart. The effect of our presence on our lay brethren has been spoken of. But there is a reflective influence in such a meeting, which has done us fall as much good as we can have done them.

The Rev. Mr. Corder, of Montreal, said,—It was refreshing to him, in the last degree, to be present at such a meeting, after being five months without seeing the face of a Unitarian minister. He then proceeded to say, that much had been said about the progress of the truth—particularly in the West. Nothing could be more gratifying to him; and he was also gratified with the determination expressed by a prominent speaker, to sustain the cause in that quarter. But he felt that he ought to portray a region to which the boast of progress did not apply, and chiefly because of the want of labourers and aid. He had been nearly alone in his labours in Montreal, in the midst of a large and heterogeneous population, among whom the seeds of faith might be sown to advantage if suitable means were adopted; but such means did not exist in Canada, although the faith was not wholly without zealous representatives there. Therefore, he begged to impress on the meeting that other regions than the West demanded attention. He concluded by expressing his satisfaction at finding in the meeting laymen uniting and sympathizing with their clergy.

Not an incident occurred during the afternoon, nor was a sentiment uttered, to interrupt the harmony of the festival, and every one present appeared to be in the highest degree satisfied with the entertainment.

MEETING OF THE NON-SUBSCRIBING ASSOCIATION, AND OF THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD.

The Non-subscribing Association of Irish Presbyterians, consisting of the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, held its fourth triennial meeting in Eustace-street meeting-house, Dublin, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 17th and 18th of July. In the unavoidable and much regretted absence of the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, the President, the Rev. James Davis preached a most excellent sermon;

after which, the Rev. Dr. Ledlie was unanimously chosen President of the Association, and the Rev. J. Nixon Porter, Clerk, for the ensuing three years. That very morning, the glorious tidings, which, though expected, gladdened many a heart, arrived:—That the “Dissenters’ Chapels Bill” had passed triumphantly through its last stage in the House of Lords, and only needed the signature of Her Gracious Majesty to place it on the Statute Book of the United Kingdom;—thereby affording us assurance that the British Government, whatever may be their faults, are disposed to protect, as far as in their power, all the subjects of their Sovereign, in the possession of their just rights, and inherited privileges,—and that, while England’s arm possesses the power, it will be exerted to defend the innocent and the weak from oppression and injustice. Full of joyous feelings at the position to which it found itself that day elevated, the Association at once proceeded to give utterance to its sentiments;—first and especially, of devout gratitude to the ruler of the universe who maketh all things—even the wrath of man—work together for good to them that love him; of thanks to the various members of both Houses of Parliament, who disinterestedly espoused the cause of oppressed justice;—of deep obligation to the different gentlemen who composed the deputations, and to whose untiring exertions to enlighten the minds of the members of Parliament on the true state of the case, much of the success of the Bill was to be attributed, as also to the liberal of other churches, who came forward with such readiness, and in such numbers, to petition on our behalf. Resolutions, expressive of such sentiments, were unanimously adopted by the Association; in supporting one of which, the Rev. J. Scott Porter, with his usual eloquence, and at considerable length, dwelt on the advantages to pure and undefiled religion which the Bill would secure, and on the defeat which injustice and intolerance, though supported by that large and powerful body, the ministers of “Orthodoxy” suffered before the invincible ranks of the friends of justice. “That,” continued he, “was really a great day for Ireland—a great day for Europe—a great day for the world; for it was not the triumph of sect over sect, but of justice over injustice;—not a triumph of the oppressor over the oppressed, but a triumph of the weak over the strong;—it was not the triumph of those who were leagued together for the purpose of trampling down the rights, and curtailing the privileges of humanity, but it was the victory of those who wished to promote religious liberty and equality.”—The Rev. W. H. Doherty, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Roman Catholics, eloquently discoursed on their attachment to the principles of civil and religious liberty, and the effort which, as a church, they made on behalf of our Bill. Various newspapers were also awarded the warmest acknowledgments of the association, for their disinterested and uncompromising support; at the head of which list, —a place which it pre-eminently merited—stood the old and tried friend of liberty, the *Northern Whig*. The Association, by a Resolution, expressed their deep sympathy with Dr. Montgomery, in his

serious and long-continued illness, and ardently hoped that he might be speedily restored to his former health.

At five o'clock, the Association dined together in the Northumberland buildings, and spent the evening in the expression of such sentiments as recent circumstances naturally suggested, under the presidency of Dr. Ledlie, who riveted the attention of all present by his statement of the history of the unhappy division of the Southern Association, but especially by the conduct of the parties in the Eustace-street case.

On Thursday, the subject of most public interest which was brought before the association, was the Irish Presbyterian Marriage Bill, then passing through Parliament. A long and interesting review of its numerous clauses, in which its defects and objectionable enactments were ably dealt with, by Dr. Montgomery, was publicly read. The association regarded it, as it then was, anything but a desirable Bill. Its machinery was too complicated and clumsy,—altogether unfit for application in Ireland.

The Remonstrant Synod held its annual meeting in Eustace-street, Dublin, on Tuesday, the 16th of July, and on the mornings and afternoons of the two following days. After the Rev. W. H. Doherty had opened the business by devotional exercises, the Rev. W. B. Miniss was appointed Moderator for the next twelve months. The calling of roll, &c. being terminated, the Rev. W. H. Doherty brought before the Synod, the state of the Belfast College, complaining of some irregularities in the opening and closing of the sessions, public examinations, &c. A lengthened conversation followed, which resulted in the appointment of a committee, to correspond with the Joint Boards; and to secure a stricter attention to the education of the Synod's Students. The Home Mission Committee reported, that, owing to the peculiar circumstances in which they had been placed for some time past, they had not attempted to occupy any new stations during the past year; they expressed their readiness, however, now to enter the field, and rejoiced in the prospect of usefulness which opened before them. Two very interesting communications, from the Remonstrant Congregation of Montreal, Canada, were then read; one of them their yearly epistle to the Synod, which gave a very gratifying account of the state and prospects of their little flock; the other, addressed to the Editor of the *Bible Christian*, praying that missionaries would be sent out to aid them in the wide and promising field which the Canadas presented. However desirous the Synod might be to be instrumental in sending "the truth as it is in Jesus," uncorrupted by the creeds and articles of man's invention, to those who were thirsting for it, they felt themselves unable to move from want of means.—On the 18th, before the termination of the business, the subject of the education of candidates for the ministry occupied the attention of the Synod for a considerable time. They resolved to adhere strictly, and in every case,

to their code. The Synod further recommended Presbyterians to require young men to repeat their trial discourses. The Moderator then concluded the business by prayer.

The Synod is to hold its next annual meeting in Banbridge, on the third Tuesday in July; and the Association its triennial meeting in Belfast, on the third Wednesday in July, 1847.

We cannot conclude this brief notice of the late important meetings of our church in this country, without expressing the great disappointment we felt — in common with all with whom we have conversed on the subject — at the indifference which our Dublin friends generally manifested, in the proceedings of the Remonstrant Synod, and the Non-subscribing Association.

Z. Z.

TESTIMONIAL TO REV. F. BISHOP, WARRINGTON.

On Thursday evening, July 25th, a public tea-meeting was held in the large room, at the Lion hotel, Warrington, to enable the friends of the Rev. F. Bishop, previous to his removal to Exeter, to testify their regard for his public conduct, during his residence among them; J. Allen, Esq. occupied the chair. After tea, the arrangements for which reflect great credit on the committee of management, the Rev. F. Howarth gave out a hymn, which was sung by the assembled company. The chairman then briefly stated the object for which the meeting was being held, and observing that it was "always usual to commence with some loyal sentiment, he should propose, "The Queen, the friend of civil and religious liberty," which was responded to by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, in a short and appropriate speech. The chairman then proposed "Our Christian brethren of all denominations," and subsequently, "Spiritual Christianity, the life of every moral agency for the destruction of sin and suffering through the universe," which were replied to by the Rev. F. Howarth, and the Rev. Russel Carpenter. At this period of the meeting, a dessert of ripe fruit, presented by various members of the congregation, was brought in, and about forty of the Sunday scholars sang, in a very pleasing style, several pieces which they had been taught by their beloved pastor; after this, the chairman called upon Mr. W. Robson to propose the next sentiment. After an address of some length, in the course of which he stated, that during the ministry of Mr. Bishop the subscribers to the chapel had nearly doubled, and the regular attenders on divine worship had increased in a still greater ratio, as well as the Sunday scholars, which, from about thirty or forty, were now upwards of one hundred and fifty in number, Mr. Robson concluded by proposing "Our beloved pastor, Mr. Bishop, with grateful thanks for the past, and our best wishes for the future;—may a life of simple devotedness to the cause of Christ, be abundantly crowned with the divine blessing;" and sat down amidst the loud applause of the meeting. The rising of Mr.

Bishop was the signal of renewed approbation; and, after an interval of some time, very much affected, he began in a few broken sentences, to thank them for the kind manner in which they had received the sentiment. After a very affecting and interesting speech of some length, he concluded, by urging them to Christian union and zeal, in carrying on the various plans of usefulness which were now in operation amongst them, and sat down amidst the mingling tears and sobs of the meeting, which, after being further addressed by the Rev. P. P. Carpenter, the Rev. R. B. Aspland, the Rev. H Green, and Mr. Moulding and Mr. West, two of the Sunday-school teachers, finally broke up about half-past ten o'clock.

On the following Sunday, Mr. Bishop preached his farewell sermon to a large, attentive, and sorrowing audience. He took for his text, 2 Corinthians xiii. 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." In alluding to the separation which was just on the point of taking place between them, his feelings became too great for utterance, and weeping eyes, and the broken sobs audible throughout the chapel, told powerfully how deep the affection with which he was regarded. Immediately after the service, the Sunday school assembled, and, after singing a hymn, presented him, by Mr. Robson (one of the teachers), a copy of the Pictorial Bible, and "Horne's Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures," handsomely bound, purchased by the joint subscriptions of the scholars and teachers, "as a parting gift expressive of their united and unanimous feeling of regard for his labours, and esteem for his character," and their "desire to mark their grateful remembrance of his unwearied solicitude for their welfare, and their most anxious wishes for his future prosperity and happiness." The scene at this time was affecting beyond description. The tears and the sobs of the scholars rose to an agony of grief, and it was not for a long time that he could either command his own feelings or obtain attention to his parting address. After a short prayer from Mr. West, and the singing of another hymn, Mr. Bishop concluded the service by delivering the blessing which had formed the text of his afternoon's discourse, and, full of grief at their separation, each one wended his way to his respective home.

THE NEW MARRIAGE ACT.

We lay before our readers as brief a statement as we can make out, of what will be required of the parties intending to enter into the marriage contract, by the law which has just been enacted, entitled "An Act for Marriages in Ireland, and for registering such marriages." This act is to come into operation after the 31st day of March, 1845: after which time, all marriages between parties, one or both of whom are Presbyterians, must be solemnized either by the license of a Presbyterian minister, or by publication of

banns, in meeting-houses certified as this Act directs, between the hours of Eight in the morning and Two in the afternoon, with open doors, in the presence of two or more credible witnesses. If by banns, the banns of matrimony shall be published by or in the presence of a Presbyterian minister, in the certified Presbyterian meeting-house in which the parties worship, upon three Sundays preceding the solemnization, during the hours of divine service:—the marriage to be in the same house, and not elsewhere. If the parties belong to different congregations, the banns must be published in each, being certified meeting-houses. The solemnization may be in either, but a written certificate of publication in the other must be produced. Six days before publication of banns, notice must be delivered in writing to the Presbyterian minister of their Christian and surname, and of the congregation to which they belong—the place of their abode, and the length of time during which they have lived in the same. For the purpose of certifying meeting-houses, one or more ministers to be appointed by each Presbytery, subject to the approbation of the Lord Lieutenant, who are to certify to the Registrar appointed, as this Act directs, that the meeting-house is within such Presbytery, and used for public worship, by Presbyterians in connexion with such Presbytery. This certificate to be signed in duplicate by the minister, to be entered, endorsed, &c. by the Registrar, according to directions given, for which he is to receive One Pound. The ministers so appointed and approved, to have authority to grant licenses for marriage in any certified Presbyterian meeting-house in his Presbytery, according to the form annexed to the act, for which he shall be entitled to have the sum of Five Shillings. No minister to grant a license until he has given security, by his bond, in the sum of One Hundred Pounds, for the due and faithful exercise of his office, and the license to be valid only for the space of one month. Before obtaining license, one of the parties must appear personally before the licensing minister, and make oath or solemn declaration—that there is no impediment of kindred, or alliance, or lawful hindrance to such marriage—that one of the parties has lived, for the space of 15 days immediately before, within the Presbytery within which the marriage is to be solemnized—that both parties are of the age of 21 years; or, if otherwise, that certain specified consent has been obtained. The party thus applying for license must, seven clear days before the license shall be delivered, produce a certificate from his or her own minister, according to a specified form—to be entered, filed, and copied into the “Marriage Notice Book,” which shall be open at all reasonable times to all persons desirous of inspecting the same.

Any person may enter a caveat against the license, into the reasons of which the minister must inquire before he grants the license; and, if in doubt, he may refer to the Presbytery, who shall have power to decide.

There is to be a “General Register-Office” in Dublin; and a Registrar-General of marriages in Ireland,—to be appointed, and

removable, by the Lord Lieutenant—to receive a salary not exceeding per annum.

The Lord Lieutenant to form all parishes, townships, and places in Ireland into certain districts, and to appoint a number of fit persons to be Registrars for such districts—these to hold their office at the pleasure of the Registrar General.

Register-Offices to be appointed in each district, of which the Registrar of the District is to have the charge.

These seem to be the principal provisions affecting Presbyterian marriages; but there are others, more complicated, to regulate marriages among other Protestant dissenters—not Presbyterian—into which we have not room to enter. It thus appears, that before marriage can take place, by the publication of banns, Three weeks, at the least, must elapse: viz.—from the Monday preceding the first Sunday of publication, to the Monday (or at shortest, Sunday evening,) after the third. Also, that if proceeding by license be preferred, there must be an interval of, at least, Seven days; and, in case of the parties living at a distance from the licensing minister, probably one or two days more. For the publication of banns no fee is required; but five shillings must be paid for each license; and, in case of accidental postponement beyond a month, a new license must be procured.

Any person solemnizing marriage contrary to the provisions of this act will be guilty of Felony; and any person refusing or omitting to register any marriage solemnized by him, or carelessly losing or injuring the Register Book, to forfeit a sum not exceeding £50; and for any false entry, or false certificate, shall be guilty of Felony.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION, NEWRY.

On the evening of the 14th July, the parents, teachers, and children of the above congregation, with many friendly visitors, met, according to annual custom, in the secluded green of their ancient meeting-house. Goodly rows of tables, well garnished with all needful things, were speedily surrounded by happy hearts and cheerful faces. There were assembled nearly 600 persons, including 290 children, in attendance on the Sunday School.

After tea, the Rev. James Davis, the venerable minister of Banbridge, was called to the Chair. He expressed his pleasure in presiding—his interest in the cause of Sabbath-school instruction—and bore testimony, from his own early experience, in times when such institutions were but in their infancy, to their great importance and utility.

The Rev. William Crozier addressed parents, teachers, and children, affectionately urging them to the fulfilment of their respective duties. Sabbath Schools were the nurseries of the church; the great means of leading young hearts to Christ, and a sphere of benevolent activity for teachers. No day more prejudicial to youth than the Sabbath ill-spent, none more blessed when devoted to the

formation of that religious and moral character which far surpassed all this world's treasure.

The Rev. John Porter delighted the company by a bold, warm speech on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. He spoke of the labours of the deputation in London, of which he was himself an efficient member. He paid a well-deserved tribute to our English Unitarian brethren, and to the bold disregard of political expediency which Sir Robert Peel had shown in his conduct of this measure.

The Rev. J. Scott Porter advocated the claims of our Unitarian brethren who are prevented, by distance, from joining in worship, which they can in all respects approve. Active measures are now taking to provide such with Unitarian preaching, and he trusted that the people would show their willingness in every way to co-operate, by bearing with the absence of their own ministers, and by pecuniary aid when necessary.

George Scott, Esq. with his usual earnest eloquence, responded to "Prosperity to the Unitarian Congregation of Newry."

Mr. James Moore, farmer, followed on the same subject in homely but hearty words, and

The Rev. Henry Alexander, after a few words on the sentiment, that "A Church really free is the best security against the corruptions of the gospel," brought a happy evening to a fitting close by a prayer of thankfulness to Almighty God.

SOIREES AT MONEYREA AND TEMPLEPATRICK.

MONEYREA.—A very numerous party met in the Moneyrea School-rooms, on Thursday evening, August 8th, to congratulate one another on the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. After tea had been served, an adjournment took place to the Meeting-house, which became densely crowded. On the motion of the Rev. F. Blakely, minister of the place, seconded by Mr. John M'Kittrick, the Rev. Robert Campbell, of Templepatrick, was called to the chair. An appropriate prayer having been offered up, Mr. Blakely read notes of apology from Counsellor Andrews, and the Revds. John Porter, W. Glendy, J. Nixon Porter, and Hugh Moore. The chairman then gave a series of sentiments, including "The Queen;" "The Lord Lieutenant;" "Her Majesty's Ministers;" "Civil and Religious Liberty;" "Education;" "The Dissenters' Chapels Act;" "The Mayor of Derry;" "Our Brethren of other Denominations;" "A free and enlightened Press;" "Congratulations to our brethren of the congregations of Eustace-street and Strand-street, Dublin," &c.; which were responded to by the Revds. Dr. Montgomery, F. Blakely, W. H. Doherty, J. M'Caw, D. Maginnis, C. J. M'Alister, and D. Gordon. In the course of the evening several hymns were sung, and the proceedings were closed with prayer.

TEMPLEPATRICK.—On Thursday evening, August 15, a very numerous and respectable party, comprising a considerable portion

of the Presbyterian congregations of Antrim and Ballyclare, in connexion with the Presbytery of Antrim, and the congregations of Crumlin and Templepatrick, in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, met at the village of Templepatrick, to congratulate one another on the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. They were joined by several friends from Belfast. After tea had been served in Gawley's Hotel, the party adjourned to the Meeting-house; when, on the motion of the Rev. Robert Campbell, *pastor loci*, seconded by James Campbell, Esq. of Belfast, Edmund Grimshaw, of Mosley, Esq. took the chair. A suitable prayer was then offered up by the Rev. Mr. Carley, of Antrim; after which the chairman gave, in succession, the following sentiments:—"The Queen,—may she long live in the hearts of her people;" "Prince Albert, and the rest of the Royal Family resident in England;" "Her Majesty's Ministers;" "Civil and Religious Liberty,"—spoken to by the Rev. George Hill; "The Rev. Dr. Montgomery,—the unflinching advocate of Unitarian rights;—the man whose hand has rent the veil of hypocrisy from sanctimonious spoliators, and to whom Unitarians owe much of their present triumph over bigotry and injustice,"—responded to by the Rev. F. Blakely; "The Glorious Triumph of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill,"—spoken to by the Rev. William Glendy; "The Presbytery of Antrim," to which the Rev. J. Carley replied; "The Congregations of Templepatrick, Crumlin, and Ballyclare,"—responded to by the Rev. R. Campbell; "Remonstrant Synod of Ulster,"—spoken to by the Rev. J. Nixon Porter; "The Ladies," was spoken to by Mr. John M'Adam. The chairman having then vacated the chair, and the Rev. F. Blakely having been called thereto, the best thanks of the meeting were given to Mr. Grimshaw, for the interest he had manifested in the proceedings, and for his proper conduct in the chair.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Rev. John Montgomery, of Belfast, has accepted an invitation to become pastor of the congregation assembling in the Abbey Chapel, Tavistock, Devonshire, vacant by the removal of the Rev. Henry Solly to the congregation of Shepton Mallet, Somersetshire.

The children of the Shore-street Sunday-school, Holywood, were entertained at tea by their teachers, and other members of the congregation, on Thursday evening, August 22d. A magic lantern, furnished by the kindness of a friend, contributed greatly to their amusement; and the teachers and pupils spent a pleasant evening,—calculated to endear them to each other, and encourage them in the performance of their Sunday-school duties.

DISSENTERS' CHAPELS ACT.

A joint meeting of the members of the first and second congregations of Protestant Dissenters in Belfast, was held in the meeting-house of the Second Congregation, after Divine Service, on Sunday, the 4th of August, 1844—JOHN G. DUNBAR, Esq. J.P. D.L. in the chair.

Moved by the Rev. J. SCOTT PORTER, seconded by ADAM M'CLEAN, Esq. and resolved—

1. That, with devout gratitude, we would acknowledge the kind providence of Almighty God to ourselves and our fellow-subjects, as shown in the great advances of religious liberty in this country, but more especially in the recent passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill into a law; and we approve of observing the 25th of August as a day of special religious exercises and thanksgiving on this account, as recommended by the late meeting of the Irish Non-subscribing Presbyterian Association.

Moved by JAMES GRIMSHAW, Esq. Whitehouse, seconded by SAMUEL BRUCE, Esq. Thorndale, and resolved—

2. That the Dissenters' Chapels Bill having now received the Royal assent, and thus become the law of the land, we feel prompted to give expression to our sentiments of loyalty and gratitude to our beloved Sovereign for completing a measure which will render her reign for ever distinguished in the history of religious toleration; and that a loyal and dutiful address, embodying these sentiments, be prepared and forwarded to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for presentation to her Majesty.

Moved by ROBERT MONTGOMERY, Esq. Sandymount, seconded by ALEXANDER BRENAN, Esq. and resolved—

3. That the address now read be adopted, and that it be engrossed and signed by the Chairman of this meeting, and by the two Secretaries, in the name of the congregations.

Moved by ROBERT GRIMSHAW, Esq. J.P. D.L. Longwood, seconded by FRANCIS RITCHIE, Esq. and resolved—

4. That, when we reflect upon the peace and satisfaction of mind resulting from the suppression of all the attacks so unjustly menaced against our congregational properties, we feel that the warm expression of our thanks is most justly due to Sir Robert Peel and the other members of her Majesty's government, for introducing to parliament a bill to quiet us in the possession of those houses of worship which we have so long occupied, which we feel to be our rightful property, and which are endeared to us by so many solemn and pleasing recollections.

Moved by S. S. THOMSON, Esq. M.D. seconded by MICHAEL ANDREWS, Esq. Ardoyne, and resolved—

5. That we owe, and hereby tender, our grateful thanks to the Lord High Chancellor of England, for that lucid and powerful exposition of our case, by which its merits were made so extensively known, and were so deeply impressed on the public mind; and for

his consistent and zealous support of the measure, in every stage of its progress.

Moved by JOHN RUSSELL, Esq. Newforge, seconded by THOMAS CORBETT, Esq. and resolved—

6. That we also owe a debt of gratitude to the Lords Brougham, Cottenham, and Campbell, and to the other Law Lords, for co-operating so heartily with the Lord Chancellor in carrying this measure through the House of Peers.

Moved by JAMES CAMPBELL, Esq. seconded by VALENTINE WHITLA, Esq. and resolved—

7. That the Marquises of Lansdowne and Clanricarde, Earls Fitzwilliam and Minto, the Bishops of Durham and Norwich, the Lords Monteagle and Beaumont, and the other noble Peers constituting the majority in the House of Lords, are entitled to our thanks for the sympathy which they manifested in our cause, and for the deep interest which they took in promoting this Act.

Moved by the Rev. WILLIAM BRUCE, seconded by JOHN GRAY, Esq. and resolved—

8. That, estimating the difficulties and obstacles interposed in the way of the members of the Commons' House, in order to prevent the progress of this act, and considering the indefatigable exertions made to excite the utmost religious antipathies against us, we acknowledge, and are thankful for the magnanimous boldness with which the leading members of the House of Commons vindicated our claims, firmly refusing to allow sectarian hatred to have any influence on their minds, and maintaining the broad principle of toleration, with a force of reason and eloquence, that will render the debate in that House, on the second reading of the Bill, conspicuous, to distant times, in our parliamentary history.

Moved by W. J. C. ALLEN, Esq. J.P. seconded by JAMES BOOMER, Esq. Seaview, and resolved—

9. That, for the distinguished parts which they took in the debate on the second reading of the bill, and in the subsequent discussions in the House of Commons, we offer our cordial thanks to Sir William Follett, attorney-general for England, to Sir Frederick Thesiger, solicitor-general, to the Right Hon. Thomas B. Macaulay, to Mr. Bernal, to Mr. Monekton Milnes, to the Right Hon. W. Gladstone, to the Right Hon. Richard L. Sheil, to the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, to the Right Hon. Lord John Russell, to Lord Sandon, to Mr. Cardwell, and to Sir Thomas Wilde; and that we feel deeply indebted to the members composing the glorious majorities, who, by their votes, affirmed the principle of this just and necessary measure of relief.

Moved by ROBERT PATTERSON, Esq. seconded by JOHN GILLIS, Esq. and resolved—

10. That we are desirous of reciprocating with our Christian brethren, of all religious denominations, the feelings of kindness, equity, and justice, which induced so many persons, widely dissenting from our views of doctrine, to present petitions to the legisla-

ture, praying for an act to relieve us from the hardships occasioned by the state of the law, as declared in several judicial decisions; and to sanction the recent measure, by the influence of their character and talents.

Moved by JOHN RIDDELL, Esq. Vermont, seconded by WILLIAM M'CAW, Esq. and resolved—

11. That our warm thanks are due to the proprietor and editor of the *Northern Whig*, for the early, consistent, and persevering support given by that journal to the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and for the paramount ability with which it advocated our claims; and also to the *Leeds Mercury*, and the other liberal papers, which, during the progress of the measure, espoused and vindicated our cause.

Moved by JOHN CURELL, Esq. J.P. Clonard, seconded by JOHN STEVENSON, Esq. Springfield, and resolved—

12. That, although we feel a peculiar interest in the recent act of parliament, since it originated in a desire to secure us from meditated injustice, yet we rejoice to look upon it as a comprehensive measure, founded on the great principle of protestant dissent, the right of private judgment, and, as such, conducive to the security and comfort of all dissenters—of those who opposed its progress, as well as of ourselves: and that we trust the spirit of even-handed justice which this act displays, will be carried still further, removing all impediments to the freedom of religious opinion, whatever may be their nature, and to whatsoever portion of the community they may apply.

Moved by J. THOMSON TENNENT, Esq. J.P. Hazelbank, seconded by SAMUEL ARCHER, Esq. and resolved—

13. That our deep-felt gratitude is due to the Rev. W. Bruce, the Rev. John Porter, W. J. C. Allen, Esq. and Francis Whitla, Esq. the gentlemen composing the deputation for promoting the recent act, on the part of these congregations, and of the Presbytery of Antrim, for their kindness in undertaking that laborious and important mission; for the masterly manner in which they conducted the business entrusted to them; for the ability which they displayed in bringing the merits of our cause before the minds of the government and the legislature, and in detecting and refuting the erroneous statements put forward in opposition to the principle of the bill; and for the manly spirit of candour, integrity, and firmness, by which their proceedings were marked, and which so powerfully contributed to that triumphant success which attended the measure in every step of its progress, in both Houses of Parliament.

Moved by THOMAS BLAIN, Esq. seconded by JOHN MONTGOMERY, Esq. Beersbridge Cottage, and resolved—

14. That our thanks are due to the Rev. Dr. Montgomery and the Rev. William Glendy, the deputies of the Remonstrant Synod, and to the Rev. Dr. Ledlie, Rev. George Armstrong, and Henry Hutton, Esq. deputies from Dublin, for their zealous co-operation and efficient services in promoting this important work.

Moved by WILLIAM GRAY, Esq. Graymount, seconded by JOHN DUNVILLE, Esq. and resolved—

15. That we cannot overlook the valuable assistance and zealous co-operation of the committee of the English Presbyterian Union, of which the late George William Wood, Esq. was the original chairman, and which, since his lamented death, has been, with such ability and energy, presided over by Mark Philips, Esq.—we feel that to the long-continued and unwearied exertions of this Committee, in making all the necessary preparations, and furnishing the requisite information to the members of parliament, we are much indebted for the effective manner in which our case was argued, both in the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

Moved by C. B. GRIMSHAW, Esq. Linfield, seconded by GEORGE M'TEAR, Esq. Abbey-hill, and resolved—

16. That Edwin Wilkins Field, Esq. is entitled to our especial thanks, for the early and persevering interest which he took in the Irish cases; and that, on this account, we feel peculiar pleasure in concurring, as we do heartily, in the acknowledgment which has been so generally made, of his zealous, able, and disinterested services; and that Charles Bischoff, Esq. is also entitled to our thanks, for his advice, co-operation, and exertions.

JOHN G. DUNBAR, *Chairman*.

J. G. Dunbar, Esq. having left the Chair, and Robert Montgomery, Esq. having been called thereto, it was moved by ANDREW MARSHALL, Esq. M.D. seconded by HENRY GARRETT, Esq. Cromac House, and resolved—

That the thanks of this meeting are due to J. G. Dunbar, Esq. for his dignified and proper conduct in the Chair.

ROBERT MONTGOMERY, *Chairman*.

GEORGE K. SMITH, *Sec. of First Congregation*.

JAMES ANDREWS, *Sec. of Second Congregation*.

Similar resolutions have been passed by the Presbytery of Antrim, the Three Non-subscribing bodies, and others. It is considered unnecessary to print them all, as the resolutions of the two Belfast congregations comprise the sentiments of all the others; and they are paid for as an advertisement.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been obliged to put aside the Report of the Boston Sunday-school Association, which is in type, to make room for a notice of the New Marriage Act. We hope to be furnished, in time for our next, with a notice of the late annual meeting of the Irish Unitarian Society. We have not received a copy of the Letter sent to the Clerk of the Remonstrant Synod from Canada.

It is requested, that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the Rev. C. J. McAlester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. X.

OCTOBER, 1844.

VOL. VI.

LIFE AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM PENN.

BY THE REV. R. E. B. MACLELLAN.

DURING this year, and in this month, occurs the bi-centenary of the birth of William Penn. He was born in October, 1644, exactly 200 years ago, and was the son of Admiral Sir William Penn, a distinguished naval commander during the turbulent eras of the reign of Charles I. the Protectorate, and the Restoration. From this father, the subject of our present notice derived that best of all prerequisites to a career of usefulness and happiness,—a good education; and made such progress in his various studies, that he was entered a gentleman commoner in the University of Oxford at the early age of fifteen. It is remarkable, that he should here make the acquaintance, and secure the friendship, of John Locke, destined to be another bright and shining ornament of that recovered Unitarian doctrine which Penn himself afterwards illustrated by his writings, and adorned by his life. If either, or both, had then attained to their faith in the Father, as “the only true God,” how deeply interesting must have been the character of their confidential discussions!—how sweet the counsel which they must often have taken together!

Penn seems early to have experienced strong and permanent religious impressions; and even at school, when only eleven years of age, to have persuaded himself that man may enjoy direct communication from on high. This conviction—which has been the prolific source of much of the enthusiasm, fanaticism, and even persecution, with which the world has been, and still is, disfigured—has also been, in gentler and more loving characters, the parent of a sustained moral heroism, which no difficulties

could impede, and no persecutions overcome. As this may be considered the peculiar, and almost the fundamental doctrine of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, we might have anticipated that Penn would eventually connect himself with that body, which he seems to have done while still at the University.

Admiral Penn, with his own high official rank and official connexions, had set his heart on his son's entering on a public and political career; where his parent's influence at court might be the means of smoothing the passage to popularity and honour. But, as few gained favour or influence with the first Charles, who did not participate in his follies, his gaieties, his licentiousness, in a word, his moral atrocities, the Admiral first grieved over, and then became indignant at, his son's decided and consistent avoidance of all light and fashionable society, and association with those only of a grave, a moral, and a religious demeanour. Few and cheerless, indeed, were the prospects of *such* a character, at a court where all display or avowal of principle or virtue, in man or in woman, was laughed at as an absurdity, or treated with all the blighting sarcasm of unsanctified wit. Irritated by the obstacles thus cast in the path of his fondest wishes, Sir William Penn, after treating his son with much severity and harshness, absolutely turned him out of doors; but, overcome by the entreaties of his wife, and his own returning sense of justice, he sent him on a continental tour, in the vain and impious hope, that the frivolities and levities of foreign society might weaken the influence of stern moral and religious feeling. On his return, William Penn had lost none of his seriousness, or of his indisposition to be identified with the pursuits of a profligate monarch, and equally profligate aristocracy; and, as a last resource, his father sent him to manage his estates in Ireland, then under the lieutenancy of the Duke of Ormond, a man of graceful manners, lively wit, and cheerful temper, and who kept viceregal state in unusual splendour. Here the hopes of the father were doomed to be completely and finally overthrown; for here Penn openly joined the Quakers, and became a preacher in their body, finding himself impelled thereto by the command of conscience, which no man ever yet resisted without loss of happiness here, and without acquisition of sorrow hereafter. The displeasing intelli-

gence soon reached his father's ear, and he commanded his son's immediate presence at home. Every effort was made, which parental love could insinuate, or parental authority enforce, to wean his child from the new opinions and practices; but all were in vain. One of Penn's earliest biographers, Joseph Besse, thus beautifully describes this interesting scene:—"And here my pen is diffident of her abilities to describe that most pathetic and moving contest which was between his father and him: his father, actuated by natural love, principally aiming at his son's temporal honour; he, guided by a divine impulse, having chiefly in view his own eternal welfare;—his father grieved to see the well-accomplished son of his hopes, now ripe for worldly promotion, voluntarily turning his back upon it; he no less afflicted, to think that a compliance with his earthly father's pleasure was inconsistent with his obedience to his heavenly one;—his father pressing his conformity to the customs and fashions of the times; he modestly craving leave to refrain from what would hurt his conscience;—his father earnestly entreating him, and almost on his knees beseeching him, to yield to his desire; he, of a loving and tender disposition, in an extreme agony of spirit to behold his father's concern and trouble;—his father threatening to disinherit him; he humbly submitting to his father's will therein;—his father turning his back on him in anger; he lifting up his heart to God for strength to support him in that time of trial."

How noble the stand here made by the youthful Reformer! and how strong that allegiance to conscience, which would not bow its dictates either to the threats or the tears even of the being who gave him life! Let the young here learn an important lesson. To your parents you owe,—for existence, for support, for the training of your bodies, for the education of your minds, for the awakening of your hearts, for the first stirring of your spirits,—a debt of gratitude you can never repay. Respect, honour, esteem; love, gentleness, tenderness; yea, in all things lawful, even acquiescence, obedience, submission; these you should render with gladness and alacrity. But you are not bound to receive, without examination, their doctrinal opinions; nor are you bound, if conscience gainsay, to unite in their doctrinal professions. So long as you are of tender years, it would be unseemly, it would be irre-

verent, to oppose your ignorance to their knowledge; your want, to their possession of experience; and, during your nonage, perhaps, no decided step, in opposition to their wishes, could be made with propriety and reverence; but when you attain the maturity of your powers, then you are bound, in the solemn concerns of religion, to judge and to act, each of you for himself. Truth must be followed, even though it lead you far away from the temples where the fathers of your flesh worship; not by their conscience, but by your own, shall you be ultimately condemned or justified.

I am sorry to record, that Penn's father again turned him out of the house, and that he would have wanted even the means of support, had he not been supplied with money privately by his mother. At this time he was about twenty-four years of age, and having publicly joined in church-membership with the Society of Friends, he assumed the new and important character of Minister of the Gospel. In the same year, 1668, he published "*The Sandy Foundation Shaken*,"—to be noticed hereafter. After his imprisonment, for the publication of this work, his father seems to have at length recognized and appreciated the exalted virtues of his son; and to have sought and effected a perfect reconciliation.

Penn's labours, in his new vocation, exposed him to many difficulties, and hardships, and persecutions. He was not only a minister, but a Dissenting minister; and, as such, subjected to all the indignities and sufferings which a dominant Establishment is always disposed to inflict on those who withstand its pretensions, or separate from its communion. In the year 1670, Parliament passed the "*Conventicle Act*;" which forbade Dissenters worshipping God as their own private judgments and private consciences dictated. No laws of man, however, had power to dissuade William Penn from the course which he believed the law of God to command. He, and several others of the Friends, went, therefore, as usual, to their meeting-house in Grace-Church Street, which they found guarded by a band of soldiery. Admittance to their own and their fathers' temple being thus denied them, they remained hovering about the entrance to their little Zion, where constant accessions to their numbers soon constituted a large assemblage. William Penn, thus excluded from

houses made with hands, began, like the apostles of old, to address his auditory beneath the vast canopy of the blue heavens; when, by a warrant from the Lord Mayor of London, he and another member of the Society were seized by constables, and dragged, like felons, to the prison of Newgate. After some time, the trial came on at the Old Bailey, where Penn pleaded his own cause; and, notwithstanding the intolerant and most disgraceful threatening, on the part of the Mayor and Recorder, the jury returned an unanimous verdict of acquittal. In the hope of tiring the twelve bold and honest men, who composed the jury, they were kept two days and two nights without refreshment of any kind; and, finding them inflexible, they were committed to Newgate, as well as Penn and his companions. Still baffled, the civil officers were obliged to liberate the jury; but detained Penn in prison, till he should pay a fine they imposed. As this would have involved an admission that he was wrong in teaching what he believed to be the truth of God, merely because those full of spiritual wickedness in high places chose to preach another gospel, Penn would probably have been a captive for the rest of his life, had not his father, secretly, and without his consent, cancelled the penalty, and thus secured his liberation. These trials but the more endeared his son to Sir William, who now first seems to understand and to reverence the law of conscience, as infinitely holier in its sanctions than any merely human law, whether parental, ecclesiastic, or civil. Shortly after, the Admiral died, leaving his son a plentiful estate, worth at least £1,500 a year, and giving him his last farewell and blessing, accompanied by this striking and righteous admonition, "Sir William, let nothing in this world tempt you to wrong your conscience. I charge you, do nothing against your conscience; so will you keep peace at home, which will be a feast to you in a day of trouble."

Not long after the death of his father, having itinerated throughout England, publishing, as he understood them, "the glad tidings of great joy," Penn returned to the metropolis. While preaching in the meeting-house belonging to the Quakers, in Wheeler-street, a sergeant and military guard pulled him down from the pulpit, and hurried him to the Tower. He was then brought up for examination before Sir John Robinson, one of the magistrates who had been

on the bench on his former trial; by whom he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. The reply of Penn is admirable, both for its unflinching, and for its charitable spirit:—"And is this all," said he. "Thou well knowest a larger imprisonment has not daunted me. I accept it at the hand of the Lord, and am contented to suffer his will. Alas! you mistake your interest. This is not the way to compass your ends. I would have thee and all men know, that I scorn that religion which is not worth suffering for, and able to sustain those who are afflicted for it. Thy religion persecutes, and mine forgives. I desire God to forgive you all that are concerned in my commitment; and I leave you all in perfect charity, wishing you everlasting salvation." He was then conveyed to his dungeon. Oh! that there were more of this magnificent, this sublime, this self-sacrificing, this truly Pauline, spirit among modern Non-conformists. The world, the flesh, yea, and the devil also, are amongst us, and entice us away from our principles. Wealth, fame, fashion, the love of ease, the dread of singularity, and, worse than all, the apathy of indifference, have well nigh stifled the Herculean energies of the old Dissent. We are afraid to resist; we are ashamed to expose; we are too polite to condemn; we are too "*liberal*," forsooth, to "cry aloud and spare not;" and, instead of having achieved perfect religious liberty, we are still under the yoke of bondage to a state theology and a state priesthood.

O PENN! "thou shouldst be living at this hour;
England hath need of thee!"

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

PART III.

THE infamous Jezebel must now come under our consideration. "Ahab did evil in the sight of the Lord; and it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him." So it happens with the man of the world. He seeks out a wife whose alliance may strengthen his interests, and whose fashion-

able manners may do credit to his taste. He troubles not himself about her principles; of course they are as sound as her neighbours'. He inquires not about her temper; if she be somewhat capricious, why, all women are alike. As to her religious views, they may haply differ widely from those he had been accustomed to regard as the right. But what though they see these things in an opposite point of view?—it matters not; they need not speak on those subjects; and she has as good a right to her truth, as he to his. For, he argues with himself, What is truth? Whatsoever any person believes to be the truth, that is truth to him! Miserable sophistry! And Ahab stands, the personification of all who thus lightly hold the pearl of great price! and his history a warning through endless ages! And now we behold this deluded king, ready to take, as the pure gold of truth, any base counterfeit which ambition, avarice, or passion, may offer, under the influence of his idolatrous wife! Behold, she reigns paramount. The prophet Elijah, who might have brought him back to God, is accounted his worst enemy; he is shunned, feared, insulted, or despised. Ahab cowers before Jehovah's messenger; Jezebel sets a price upon his head. Her minions are ever out, watching to slay the prophets of the Lord, wherever they may be found; and daily must Ahab waste his substance on those whom he ought, like David, to have accounted his enemies: "The prophets of Baal, four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves, four hundred, eat at Jezebel's table." A wonderful spirit is at work;—these are slain—all of them; but Jezebel, like Pharaoh of old, hardens her heart.

And now, behold, the husband of this clever, but wicked, woman is sick; he is sad; he eats no bread. She enquires into the cause (with which, we may presume, a woman of her wit was already acquainted). He tells her all;—a subject has dared to cross his will; he has refused to resign, or sell to him, the inheritance of his fathers. His wife soon finds a remedy. "And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry; I WILL GIVE THEE THE VINEYARD OF NABOTH THE JEZREELITE." What a treasure of a wife! Neither duty, honour, nor mercy, stands in her way, when it is her aim to please her husband! She kept her word; by using

her husband's name, and setting his seal to a blood-thirsty and treacherous plot, she accomplished her promise,—I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth! Enough for him; the work is done; it is wise to enquire not how! May we not suppose that our great poet, in his character of Lady Macbeth, may have taken, if not the model altogether, at least a hint, from Jezebel's conduct, in this scene? The bold, Satanic wickedness of the clever woman, contrasted so strongly with the weak mind and shallow pretences of the contemptible husband.

“Would'st not play false—and yet would'st wrongly win.”

Lo! the word of the Lord is gone forth against Jezebel: “The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.” And now Ahab is dead, and this is the judgment given of him in the word of truth: “But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord; *whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.*” Jezebel is now the mother, instead of the wife, of a king; and her very name brings perdition on her son. See chap. ix. of 2 Kings, verses 22—24 But Jezebel is not yet subdued; her husband is dead—her son is slain; how is the widow and mother employed?—weeping for her friends?—howling for her miseries and deadly sins? Oh! no; she is painting her face, and tiring her head, that she may make an impression on the conqueror! But she need array her faded charms no more. The command has gone forth,—Throw her from the casement. It is done,—and the word of the Lord is fulfilled. The dogs have licked the blood of Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Awful catastrophe! What an end for the proud!

“I viewed the sinner's life before,

But here I learn his end.”

A certain woman, of the wives of the sons of the prophets, cried unto the prophet Elisha, informing him that her husband is dead, and the creditor is coming upon her to take her two sons to be bondsmen. She pleads, movingly, the character of her husband: “Thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord.” Elisha has compassion upon her; and, like his great progenitor, whose mantle of prophecy has fallen upon him, he multiplies the widow's oil, not to save her from famine, but from the hand of the merciless creditor. This poor widow made a good choice.

of a friend. The prophet did her not this kindness, *lest by her continual coming she should weary him*; but he took up her cause because it was a just one, and because this widow had no friend. Nor did he oppress her with ostentatious favours; but simply, by multiplying her own resources, enabled her to pay her debts. How beautiful it is, when benevolence and simplicity go hand in hand to pour their consolations on the widow's head!

A rich woman, dwelling in Shunem, shows hospitality and kindness to Elisha the prophet. She is as unlike as possible to the idolatrous Jezebel. So far is she from turning away from her husband the friendship of the man of God, that it is by her instigation that he builds for him, in his house, a small chamber, where the prophet may go in and out, and consider it his home whenever he shall be travelling that way. This pious woman delights herself in preparing it for him; and when the prophet arrives, he is charmed with her kindness: "And he said to Gehazi, his servant, Call this Shunamite; and when he had called her, she stood before him." He acknowledges her kindness, with gratitude, and asks her what he may do for her in return: "Wilt thou be spoken of to the king, or to the captain of the host?" There is no ambition, or covetousness, in her heart; no selfish motives spurred on her exertions; it was enough for her that the prophet of Jehovah honoured her dwelling. She answers, with noble simplicity, "I dwell among mine own people." On a hint from his servant, the man of God considers that there may be yet one thing wanting to her happiness. That one is in time supplied to her, and she is the mother of a son. Years are passed on; the child is grown, and is gone out with his father to the reapers. The lad is stricken by a sun-stroke, as we may suppose, by the expression used in his complaint; and, being carried to his mother, dies at noon. This wise and pious woman loses no time in vain lamentations; but, taking up her son's body, lays it on the bed in the chamber which she had prepared as the resort of the prophet. Then she arrayed herself for her journey, and went quickly to the foot of Mount Carmel, where she found the man of God. When he, from a great distance, perceived her coming, he sent Gehazi to ask after her affairs. To all his enquiries she makes the one answer, "It is well;" but when she approaches Elisha himself, the

fountain of her sorrows gushes forth: "And when she came to the man of God, to the hill, she caught him by the feet. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?" The prophet then commands his servant to go, and seek to revive the child; but she is resolved she will take no substitute;—he must himself accompany her,—he must himself behold him. The Shunamite's faith was not disappointed. It was given to the prophet to restore her lost treasure: "And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out." Thus did this woman, by her piety and wisdom, bless others—gain an unsought blessing—find consolation in the day of her calamity—and win the favour of good men!

Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, was wife to Jehoram, and mother of Ahaziah, two kings of Judah who did evil in the sight of the Lord. The Scripture says of the latter, "He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; *for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.*" She was a worthy daughter of the house from whence she drew her descent,—daughter of Ahab, and granddaughter of Omri. She has benefited by the counsels of Jezebel. What a wicked heart she manifested, when, on the death of her feeble-minded son, she determined on seizing the sceptre of Judah, without regard to mercy, justice, or kindred;—she arose, and destroyed all the seed royal! Haply Jehoshabeath, whose name should be honoured, the sister of Ahaziah, took his infant son, and hid him, with his nurse, in a bedchamber. This woman was united to Jehoiada the priest, and shared not the counsels of the inhuman Athaliah. For six years Athaliah is allowed to rejoice in her iniquity; but on the seventh she must pay retribution. Her golden crown is become dim; her iron sceptre bends as a reed! The young king is brought to claim his right; and Athaliah, whilst she rends her garments, and cries, Treason! treason! is thrust out of the temple, and ignominiously slain beside the entrance of the king's palace.

What shall we say of Vashti, the queen of the great Ahasuerus, who ventured to disobey her husband, when, after seven days' feasting, his heart being "merry with wine," he sent his seven chamberlains to bring her forward

to be gazed at by him, and the companions of his revelry. Shall we condemn her that she refused to come? Has a husband a right to wound the feelings of his wife? No; even though he be a king, we assuredly say he has not. The man who could do it, must be a worthless, selfish, coward; and there was no degradation to Queen Vashti in being separated from him. Whatever she lost in outward station, she gained in moral dignity. Her *fall* should have been considered a *rise*, by every discerning mind.

Esther, the successor of Vashti in the favour of royalty, is distinguished for many glorious qualities. Beautiful in mind, as in bodily form; ever grateful and obedient to her first and early friend; discreet, calm, and pure; courageous to act, where duty called her; never, for a moment, permitting the splendour of an idolatrous court to turn away her heart and memory from her suffering people, to whom, under Providence, she became, through the guidance of Mordecai, a source of present salvation and lasting benefit. She is to be honoured by all who love virtue and wisdom in woman!

We have brought nearly to a conclusion our simple comments on the women of the Old Testament. We pretend not to have said anything new or striking; but only to have spoken as our heart dictated. We have a word to say concerning Job's wife. In the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, she is represented as saying to her husband, "Curse God, and die." Why, we ask the learned, for information's sake,—why must this woman be represented as saying anything so shocking and profane as, "Curse God, and die"? True, Job tells her she speaks as one of the foolish women speak; but if she meant (as it seems to us that she may have designed to do) to hint to him that a valiant man might end his own troubles, she well deserved the rebuke. The remainder of his reply favours this suggestion: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil also?" thus showing her, that he thought patient submission the best courage. Shall we speak of Judith? Though her history is only found in the Apocrypha, she seems to have had a real existence. She was, truly, a very remarkable woman, and showed great magnanimity, and love to her country. We would not quite like her as a Christian woman; but, as a Jew, she was certainly worthy of her country's gratitude and admiration.

THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN.

(EXTRACT FROM A SERMON BY THE REV. G. F. SIMMONS.)

CHRIST teaches that the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath. God finds no pleasure in pomp and forms. Worship does not gratify him, except it spiritualizes his creatures. Man is not made to bow down with trembling before a tyrant; but to rise to a likeness with his father. Man is not made that he may set apart a day on which to render tributary service to a sovereign; but that day of service is made for him, for his good, for his happiness, for his elevation, for his rescue from the dangers of the world. The Sabbath is made for man.

He needs such a day. He needs it in order that he may not live in vain. Man is born for virtue. To see, to know, to serve, to resemble God, is the only end of his being. Without this, there would be no reason for his continuing to exist. His waking and his sleep; his ardent pursuits; his entrancing pleasures; his subduing pains; his conflicts, necessities, and disappointments; the favours and frowns of conscience; the terrors of death;—all his experiences are only meant to educate his spirit, and bring it to that knowledge of God, which is eternal life. Without devotion, life becomes contemptible. Outward possessions are but children's toys, except as they minister to a higher good. We are walking through this earth,—not that we may be rich,—not that we may fritter away our day in empty pleasure,—not that we may be honoured, and powerful, and happy;—but that we may be saved.

He needs such a day of rest and spiritual refreshing. The want is attested by the practice of nations. Seriously convinced of the destructive tendency of worldly principles uncontrolled by piety, by universal consent, Christians set apart a day on which to wash the spirit free from all earth-born stains, and raise the eye, with tranquil satisfaction, from the dusty earth, to the heaven which is our goal. The light which now shines upon us, sheds itself along our shores, upon millions of worshippers; and, even at this moment, breaking in dim dawn upon another continent, wakes millions more to the same jubilee of love and rest. Thus, on this sacred day, does the sun, made holy by its mission, visiting the followers of Christ, whether collected in Christian society within the wide border of Europe, or dispersed among the heathen of India, or Cape

Horn, rouse each people, in succession, from earthly cares to the adoration of him who made it. We feel inspired by the sense of this vast and holy society. We join in the worship of a world. The unity of the offering is not indeed unbroken. Many, even in countries on which the light has fallen, pass the day in riot; and many bring only their bodies within the church's walls, and leave their souls behind. Yet millions, too, do raise their souls in sincere and heartfelt adoration. Millions awake to a new sense of the charms of virtue. The Holy Spirit extends its sway. It insinuates itself into prepared minds, and spreads its peace abroad. The penitent, the bereaved, the orphan, dry their tears and are subdued by love. The heart long hardened, is pierced with sudden terror at apprehension of its fate; and the heart long agitated by remorse, finds quiet and serene hope in the faith of Christ. To one who feels the brotherhood of humanity, there is something very affecting in the contemplation of a world thus turning itself to the Source of Being. It is a practical confirmation of the uses and necessity of the Sabbath; and it impels one to join the universal jubilee with ready gratitude.

We all feel how much we need this day. Every one who cultivates his own character feels the urgent necessity of frequently snatching himself from the flood of trifles with which the world bears him down, to solitude and contemplation. Even the sinless Jesus frequently retreated to the mountain top to commune with his Father. There he imbibed the holiness which enabled him to conquer the world. Much more do frail men, whose lives are devoted to far different objects than the redemption of the race, who are engrossed in the pitiless anxieties of business, during the whole of the week, so that they allow themselves hardly a respite for meditation, need the tranquilizing influences of a day of rest. They need, at frequent intervals, to mount above the obscuring cloud and observe their true situation, and see whether their course is directed towards the only haven. If they allow themselves to continue in uninterrupted pursuit of gain, their spiritual powers, their religious and moral instincts, will die for want of nutriment and exercise. The mind, more and more habituated to petty cares, will become chained to things which it ought not to value, and be shut out from the regions of piety and peace; faith, long neglected, will

become difficult in the extreme; and he who, as a youth, began only with a spirit of enterprize, associated with lofty ends and principles, will end a selfish and worldly man. To those who thus run the career of evil, the gospel sounds its loud warning. Jesus, by his example and his word, if these have not ceased to move, interposes to arrest them. Let them be persuaded that they are not safe in this unceasing tide. They must pause, and look around them; they will find themselves far from the course in which they ought to be. It is not that one day in the week should be devoted to the cultivation of our better nature, and the others to the cultivation of the worse; but the whole should be devoted to the cultivation of the better. Appetite and selfishness grow strong enough without our encouragement. The whole energy of the man ought to be given to the rearing of our god-like attributes; and the calm meditation, and study, and prayer of a day of pious rest is necessary to enable one thus to devote himself. Then he may imbibe a spirit which will sanctify his business. Then he may rise to views of life which will make him despise mere gain, and teach him a higher end of business than riches; which will induce him to pursue his calling, chiefly that by such exercise his spirit may be fitted for the skies, and that he may bring within his reach the means of benevolence and of virtuous influence. But the merchant who has no such periods of spiritual elevation, how dark and dead does his spirit become! Those celestial faculties, those angelic instincts, those elements infused from God's own being, become blighted and extinguished in his breast. Foolish man! he goes on unchecked in his affairs, he prides himself on his successful negotiations, and on the luxury of his home; but there is a negotiation which he cannot carry on, and his truest home lies desolate. What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? The treasures he has amassed he cannot carry with him; this the most fool-hardy knows: and it is well that he cannot; they would only prolong his delusion.

So much do men value peace of mind, and a fair prospect of future life, that I am convinced, if they clearly and strongly felt that this unscrupulous devotion to business, even to the invasion of the hours of Christian worship, were destructive to their souls, they would relinquish

it. But this they do not feel. They would probably tell you, that they do not find but that they are in as good a state of mind doing business on Sunday, as going to meeting; and if they go to church, it is only to comply with fashion, and hear repeated what they had heard a thousand times before; and that it is but an idle and sluggish day, stolen from them, while a hundred things in the counting-room remain to be attended to. Thus their remissness furnishes its own excuse. But, even if the case were as they present it, we answer, that even an idle Sabbath is better than a worldly one. But it is plain that their objection lies against an ill-spent Sabbath, not against a well-spent Sabbath. We would not have them suspend their business for the slumbering performance of unwelcome duties, but for the willing and hearty worship of God, to whom they owe all, and whom it is the highest bliss to serve.

Let them approach the day as the happy jubilee of their spirits, and escaping not only from the toils, but also from all the anxieties of their employments, give up their souls, without fear or reservation, to the exercises of piety. Let the Scriptures then be made familiar; let the heart be taught to mount in prayer, and be long detained in blessed nearness to heaven; let the whole power of reason and will be put forth to gain a clearer and wider prospect of the scenes through which, as we pass, God reveals himself. Then we shall not feel that the day is lost, but hold it the most precious of all. How much better is it to add to the treasures within, than to those without! Of how much more worth is a virtue, than the richest ship that ever burdened the seas! How much more ought I to exult at being able to pour out my prayers with confidence, than at having my notes-of-hand received without hesitation in all the cities of the world! Let the fool spend the Sabbath with his accounts; but let the wise man spend it with his God.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

THE FUNERAL OF A MOTH: A CHILD'S VISION.

BY MRS. SEBA SMITH.

A LITTLE child had been amusing himself at the feet of his mother, kicking and rolling about, and playing all sorts of antics, when he espied a moth disengage itself from the

fibres of the carpet, and poise its small wing with a short, wavering flight. The child stopped his noisy song, rolled over upon all-fours, and commenced a scramble for the poor insect, clapping his clumsy hand upon the carpet, in the hope of striking it down. He did so at last; the moth fell upon its side, quivered slightly, and was still.

The child would have taken it in his hand, but suddenly there was a sound, as of innumerable tiny bells tolling, and very low, sad music. He laid his cheek upon his arm, the bright curls falling all about the carpet, and his little feet stretched out, and crossed one over the other, the disarranged tunic revealing, liberally, his round white limbs, indolently exposed. Thus the child lay, listening to the music, that seemed to say,

“ Alas! for death is amongst us.”

He could not tell what was meant; but he saw that the beautiful moth stirred not, and he felt something very sad must have happened. At length a large black beetle was seen to move slowly along, and look at the little insect; and then, while the eyes of the child were fixed intently to see what would come of it, the beetle seemed a little small old woman, much wrinkled, and dressed in black. She moved about quite briskly; and the child could scarce forbear a smile, to see such an alert, diminutive thing. His mother's little gold thimble had fallen from her basket, and now stood upon the carpet, beside the dead moth, and the child observed that the little woman in black was not as tall as the thimble. She took a robe, made of the fibres of a rose leaf, from her pocket, and shrouded the moth, singing all the time,

“ Alas! for the gladsome wing
Shall never more be spread;
When cheerful voices ring,
They may not raise the dead.”

Then a grasshopper came in, with a slow, sepulchral tread, bearing upon his thigh the severed pericarp of the balsam (*Impatiens*), lined with gossamer, and having tassels hanging from the pall. He had no sooner approached the dead moth, than he appeared a grave and venerable undertaker, bearing the coffin, into which he and the little old woman put the poor insect, and covered it with the pall of gossamer, singing, all the time, in a sweet, sad voice.

Then an immense procession of moths (they were of that kind called death's-head, undoubtedly a class designed to officiate exclusively at funerals) followed the undertaker, as he bore out the body; but as they moved on, they were little men and women, dressed in drab, each with a sad, pale face, and now and then one of the younger, with a handkerchief pressed to the eyes; while all sang in chorus the following words:—

“ Rest thee, rest thee, blighted one,
Sunshine may not come to thee;
When our joyous wings are spread,
Thine in death shall folded be.
Rest thee; sad and early called
From our pleasant haunts away,
Where we meet in sunset revels,
At the close of summer day.”

The child heard the hum of their voices, when he had ceased to distinguish their words. Then he arose, and laying his head upon his mother's lap, wept bitterly, telling her what he had heard and seen, and asking what *death* meant. She talked long upon the sad but pleasant subject, telling of that land where death is not, till the heart of the little child grew joyous within him, and he called that land his home. Had the child been less young, or less innocent, the visions of the moth's funeral had not been vouchsafed. But he never, from that time, wantonly destroyed the humblest creature made by the wisdom, the goodness, and love of our Heavenly Father. He saw there was room enough in the great world, and in the pleasant sunshine, for him and them; and he remembered that a better land had been promised to man only; therefore he would not abridge the few days of happiness granted the little insect. The child daily grew gentle and loving; for the exercise of kindness, even in one simple instance, had fixed the principle in his young heart, till it expanded so that it embraced all the creatures made by our great and good Parent. It was thus that he learned, not only to love worthily the good and loving, but even those in whom the image of God, stamped upon the human soul, had become marred and effaced by sin. He loved and prayed even for these, and the blessedness of such prayers returned upon his own head. Thus did the child learn a lesson of wisdom and of goodness from the Funeral of the Moth.

A MOTHER'S VOICE.

I loved to hear my mother's voice,
 'Tis music to a child;
 The sound would make my heart rejoice,
 Though heedless then and wild.

Her gentle whispers in my ear,
 Still called me to attend;
 A mother's voice! who would not hear,—
 And trust, that faithful friend?

We look around,—the world is fair—
 Its flow'ry path we tread;
 A mother's voice,—repeats the prayer,
 For help, where snares are spread.

A mother speaks of things divine,
 Deep on her soul impressed;
 And oft reflected, thence they shine
 Within the youthful breast.

Oh! children, listen while you may,
 Sweet is the voice of love;
 How large the debt for you to pay,
 Let your obedience prove.

A. B.

*July, 1844.***INTELLIGENCE.****SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY, BOSTON, U.S.**

THE sixteenth anniversary of this Society was celebrated on Wednesday evening, May 29th, at Rev. Mr. Gannett's church. A large audience of pastors, teachers, and friends of the Sunday School were present. The services of the evening commenced with a voluntary on the organ, which was followed by a chant sung by the sweet voices of a choir of about sixty children. Prayer was then offered by the venerable Rev. Dr. Kendall, of Plymouth, who supplicated the divine blessing on the cause which had brought us together, and upon all who are engaged in it. The Annual Report was then read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. R. C. Waterston. In the commencement, a touching tribute was paid to the memory of the lamented Ware and Storer, both Vice-Presidents of the Society, and earnest friends of the Sunday School. Interesting letters from distin-

guished clergymen of England and the United States were read in full, or in part, before the meeting, and heard with pleasure. During the last year, the Associate Agents of the Society have visited 48 towns in five different States, and 8,700 tracts have been distributed, being an increase over the last year of 1162. The Report closed with some remarks upon the good which has been, and that which remains to be accomplished. While positive statistics of crime prove that there has been a decrease in proportion to the increase of population, yet there is still much darkness to enlighten, much evil to overcome. The work of Christianity is not yet over, and the time has not arrived when we may safely close the doors of the Sunday School.

An original hymn was then sung, after which the Honourable Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, the President of the Society, spoke to the following effect:—"At the close of another year, we have come together to contemplate the past, to observe the present, and to anticipate the future in respect to the Sunday School. How is it possible for us to meet together, without regarding the institution of the Sunday School as a Christian institution? In reviewing the life and character of Christ himself, does it not seem that that character would be defective, or the history of that life imperfect, if we were deprived of all record of his interest and regard in the welfare of children? When others repulsed, he received them with open arms, and with a declaration never to be forgotten. And how innocently and naturally the hearts of children then responded to his call.—How beautiful is the relation of children to Christ, and of Christ to children! When he entered Jerusalem, he paced its temple-courts, and performed his characteristic works of mercy, his miracles of love. How was he regarded by those in authority? With contempt and scorn. But as he entered those temple courts, the children collected to salute him with their hosannas of praise. The Sunday School is designed for this time and for ever, to embody and personify the Saviour in the hearts of children. A voice still utters what was long ago spoken: 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;' and the call is still made by this institution, to all who come within its influence."

Rev. Mr. FOSDICK, of Sterling, spoke upon a point suggested frequently and strongly in the Report of the Secretary. We mean the use of the Bible in the Sunday School as a more prominent, if not the exclusive text-book for instruction. It is for Liberal Christians, who stand in the fore-front of the Protestant ranks, in asserting the doctrine of the sufficiency of the Scriptures, to follow out their principles in the instruction of the young. We should present children the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. Some think that they should reach a more mature age before doctrines should be unfolded to them. But such an idea is impracticable. We cannot prevent the mind of a child from being occupied with some views of the doctrine of religion. In teaching doctrines, we should take the Bible as the standard of our instruc-

tions. — There are other influences in this age placed side by side with the Bible. Tradition is placed on a level with the Holy Scriptures; and there is a disposition to detract from their integrity and authority, to regard them as imperfect, and the Gospel as not adapted to be presented to the minds of children. Let us take, then, the Bible for our main text-book, and let none other usurp, as none other can supply its place. Question books might, with advantage, be generally consigned to the use of the teacher, in his study and preparation for the Sabbath. If he studies the Scriptures, with this aid, before going to his class, and then presents to his pupils some life-like story from the Old or New Testament, or makes the Gospel the object of remark, and the means of religious influence, he will accomplish more good than in any other way, and will find success to accompany his efforts.

After the singing of another hymn, the Rev. Mr. Osgood, of Providence, spoke of the nature and object of the Sunday School. Some are apt to think that the Sunday School is a new institution, whereas it is only a new form of an old thing. We are to look upon the Sunday School as forming a part of the church. The Sunday School sometimes becomes a secular affair; natural history, or some other science is taught, and the Gospel is made a secondary subject, or neglected. The New Testament idea is, that young children be considered as members (not communicants) of the Christian church. Christianity is not something which they can choose or reject at pleasure. Men are ready to feel that they owe obedience to the church. Let us point children up to Jesus, and they will be ready to feel the same idea. We must make them feel that they are enlisted in the cause of Jesus, and that the Sunday School is that sphere in which they may show their allegiance. Christian ministers need to acknowledge this also. No good can be done, without looking to a high source for strength and assistance. We must draw from the river which maketh glad the city of our God, looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, and to the Sunday School as constituting a part of the Christian church, and it will awake to new vigour and life. Children, remember this; remember that you are fellow-citizens of the saints of the household of God. Young men and maidens, never forget the songs in which you have this evening united, and never lay them aside when the temptations of life assail you. Lambs of the flock of Christ, God's blessing be with you.

Rev. Mr. HOLLAND, of Rochester, observed, that wherever the banner of our faith had been carried, children have been the first to gather around it. The Sabbath School has always grown faster than the Society. We must begin at the foundation; and we trust and believe we may thus raise up a generation to sustain the institutions which we are endeavouring to build up. Text-books, if we do not go beneath and beyond them, will not accomplish the true object of the Sabbath School institution. There are deep yearnings, fond desires, strong emotions, within the hearts of children, which call for something more than merely secular, his-

torical, and statistical instruction. In the Sabbath School, connected with the State Prison of New York, instruction has been given chiefly from the Union Question Book. What was the impression made? On being asked a certain question from the book, the pupil would give the annexed answer, and then begin to laugh and play. A friend, who entered the class one day, asked for what religion was given, if it was not to open a bright and glorious prospect of a future world. The fountains of feeling then began to gush forth almost at once into tears, and one solemnly confessed a resolve to lead a new life. We must feel on the subject of religion, cultivate the spirit of love, and from warm and living fountains, bring the truth to those who are thirsting to receive life.

Rev. Mr. Harrington, of Providence, offered some excellent remarks to the following effect:—"I rise to utter a thought inspired by a single sentence in the Report. 'As the teachers are, so must the school be.' All must feel this to be true. As each individual teacher is, so will his class be. Wherever interest and attention are manifested on the part of the teacher, we have interest and attention on the part of the children. And where shall we hope to obtain the foundation of love, and sympathy, and interest? Only from a consciousness of the value of the truth, and of the value of religion to our own souls, and in no other way. We may have our books of questions and answers, we may do all to interest them, we may be full of anecdote, but they will all prove nothingness, unless we know what the truth is. Christ came to bring truth into the world. Do we possess it? Do we go to our classes, and show them, by example and precept, that we appreciate the great truths of Christ's gospel? Do we exhibit humility, simplicity, and lowliness? If there are any of us who have not the consciousness of effort for the truth, let them begin to pray for the influence of God's spirit to-night, that they may go to their classes on the next Sabbath more prayerful, more devoted, more true to their responsible trust.—Children, will you help your teachers? We have said a word to encourage them in their duty. Will you come to the Sunday School conscious that you have souls, and seek to train them up for heaven and nothing else in this world? Will you come in the spirit of prayer, and learn to pray every day? How pleased have I been with your sweet songs! I have heard a great deal of scientific singing, but none which touches my heart more than yours. And if I should even be so true to my duty, as to reach that heaven which is the end of the righteous, it is my most earnest prayer that I may meet you there, and hear you sing the song of the Lamb before God the Father."

Rev. Mr. Corder, of Montreal, gave an interesting account of the prospects of our cause in England and Ireland. The course of instruction given in the two islands differs in some respects. In Ireland, the instruction in the Sunday School is purely religious; the Bible, and the New Testament particularly, being made the

text-book. The great doctrines of that book are taught, as well as its precepts, to be obeyed, and its examples to be followed. The system has wrought well in Ireland. The community has become interested, and more money was collected for the institution during the last year, than in any previous years. The Bible is the principal book used in the Sunday School; and one thing we have learned, that we may place the Bible in the hands of the young, without fearing that it will lead them astray.

After some remarks from the Rev. Mr. Waterston, the meeting terminated.

As the audience were retiring, the children united their harmonious voices in the following appropriate hymn:—

Good night! good night, to speech and song,
 Good night! for time is fleeting,—
 May memory's voice remind us long
 Of this our happy meeting.
 And may you wake, with bosoms light,
 Unclouded by a sorrow,
 From dreams of all you love, to-night,
 To pleasant hours to-morrow.
 And for a theme,
 May every dream,
 From Hope her rainbow borrow.
 Good night! to all a kind good night,

Good night! good night! we humbly pray,
 To heaven our hearts addressing,
 Our every thought and act to-day,
 May meet God's holy blessing.
 Pure as the dew unseen ascends,
 In morning's sunny hour,
 Pure as the spotless lily bends
 To heaven her vestal flower,
 So purely there
 Oh, let our prayer
 Rise to the same good Power.
 Good night! to all a kind good night.

IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

The fourteenth anniversary of this Society was held in Dublin, on Sunday, the 30th June, and Tuesday, the 2d July last. Impressive and eloquent discourses were preached before the Society, on Sunday, by the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, of Leeds. The morning discourse was from a passage in the Acts of the Apostles: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."—Acts ix. 31. The preacher introduced the subject by some remarks on the occasion of this rest, and adopted and explained Dr. Lardner's beautiful illustration of it; who accounts for the withdrawal of the Jews' hostility from the Christians, by the persecution which impended

over themselves, from the threatened introduction of Caligula's statue, by Petronius, into the temple. He then went on to show, at length, the attachment of men to their religion, and the sources of bigotry in that attachment, when unenlightened by knowledge and inquiry. He illustrated this by the case of the Heathens, the Jews, the Catholics, and the Protestants, at the introduction, respectively, of Christianity, Protestantism, and Unitarianism. He said that for a long time, during these various changes, men really thought that the essentials of religion were involved in and swept away by these changes; and therefore they opposed them with earnestness, and regarded innovators in the same light as destroyers;—reformers, in the same light as Atheists! For if our proposed reformation is thought to take away the essentials of religion, it is identified with the destruction of religion itself. This accounts for the hostility with which Unitarianism has been regarded, even by enlightened men. But at length it came to be perceived that Unitarians were anxious to build up pure religion, not to destroy it; and enlightened men no longer allowed the law to be directed against them, as against blasphemers. The only person that lagged behind in that progress was the bigot; who still thought the very heart and essence of religion locked up in his peculiar doctrines, and regarded as nought the important truths which the Unitarian still resolutely upheld, and was determined to purify, and restore to their proper prominence. In this country, the successive efforts of the bigot to hold back this growing perception of the genuine objects of the Unitarians, as upholders of a purer form of religion, and no enemies to it, had been utterly vain: and the preacher then alluded to the recent triumph of liberal policy, over stupid and narrow intolerance, and urged on his hearers the duties that devolved upon us in this improved state of matters; showing that now we could not with propriety maintain our cause as though our hand were against every man, and every man's hand against us; but might really proceed in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit of our faith, and be edified and multiplied.

The evening discourse was a defence of Unitarianism from the charge of being a religion of negations, and a proof from Scripture of its leading principles and doctrines; showing that it ministered to man's deepest wants and most earnest affections, and that though we might, in our controversies on the corruptions of religion, appear as mere deniers, we had an inner heart of faith, and knew whereof we affirmed.

The anniversary meeting of the Society was held at the Rotundo, on Tuesday evening. The room was filled with a highly respectable and influential assemblage, including a gratifying proportion of strangers. In the absence of Mr. Digby, the President of the preceding year, the chair was taken by the President-elect, the Rev. E. F. Day, formerly a clergyman of the Established Church. The Rev. Joseph Hutton having opened the proceedings by prayer, and the Report of the Committee having been read by the Secretary, Mr. Robert Andrews, it was moved by the Rev. Dr. Drummond,

and seconded by Mr. Ball—"That the report should be received, approved, and ordered to be printed." The reverend mover forcibly and eloquently commented on some of the important topics touched upon in the report, and was ably followed by the learned seconder; but we regret, circumstances, at the time, prevented us from taking a note that would do justice to either of the speakers.

Mr. James Haughton moved, and Mr. Hamilton Rankin seconded, the next resolution—"That the thanks of the Society were eminently due, and were thereby presented, to the Rev. Mr. Wicksteed, of Leeds, for his able, eloquent, and Christian discourses preached before the Society." Mr. Haughton expressed the sincere pleasure he felt in the performance of that duty, which he had no doubt was shared by all his friends who had had the gratification of listening to the two beautiful sermons which had been preached by our respected friend,—sermons which proceeded from a heart evidently deeply imbued with the truths of our soul-cheering views of Christianity. Mr. H. said, his only regret was, that a much larger audience was not there to hear them; and he asked why it was that our meeting-house was not always full of worshippers? Mr. Wicksteed had alluded to some of the reasons. He (Mr. H.) thought others might be named. Christianity—for which Unitarianism was but another name—was a religion of works, as well as a religion of faith. We should be eminently active in works of benevolence—foremost among all those who were labouring on behalf of humanity. Are Unitarians sufficiently known among their fellow-citizens in this character? There are inquiring minds in our country, who would be attracted towards us if we proved the superiority of our faith by our works. Three great questions of moral reform now agitate our country and the world—Teetotalism, Peace, Anti-slavery—each and all of which are acknowledged by *all* to be pregnant with blessings to the human family. Associations for their promotion are in our city, and meetings are held to carry them forward. Why are not Unitarians the active supporters of these associations? Can we hope for the blessing of the Almighty on *our* efforts to promote the principles of pure Christianity, unless we are found willing labourers in furtherance of these good works? These, and other similar questions, Mr. H. said he wished Unitarians to put to themselves; he wished the clergy and the laity to think on these things, believing them, himself, to be matters for serious consideration with those who were really in earnest for the establishment of the religion of peace and love upon earth. Mr. H. alluded to one other matter—punishment by death—which he considered unchristian, and disgraceful to the age we live in. He contended that all severe punishment, by man, is wrong; but that irreparable punishment is altogether indefensible on Christian principles. He urged Unitarians to be alive in their opposition to that inhuman practice; and he took his seat, cordially recommending to the meeting the vote of thanks which he had the pleasure to move.

Mr. Wicksteed acknowledged the vote of thanks, saying, that

he would only take a professional portion of the kind remarks which Mr. Haughton had made upon his services—namely, a tithe. He was, indeed, glad to be among them on that occasion. He was convinced that such meetings were of the most important benefit to the cause of religious truth. Some statesman had said, when asked how a declining party should be resuscitated, “Gentlemen, very frequently dine together.” He was sure that the advocates of every cause should “very frequently meet together.” People were too prone to keep aloof from such occasions as the present, fancying that their minds were made up, and that they need not trouble themselves to attend to hear advocated and illustrated what they already believed to be the truth. But God had ordained, that as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man; and in a public meeting, sentiments were aroused and spread from heart to heart, as by an electric chain, which we could not realize in our privacy. He believed that, let a man have the deepest convictions of the sublimest and most blessed truths, if he did not communicate with others upon them—if he retired into the wilderness, or the solitude—those truths would die even out of his own heart. He understood, from the report which the Secretary had just read, that one of the objects of this Society was to promote “sympathy and co-operation” among its subscribers and supporters. He hailed that object as a most necessary and indispensable one to any success in promoting the knowledge of the pure religion of Jesus. On these occasions, views were suggested by speaker after speaker, which acted upon the hearts and consciences of those present, and created a new and vivid, and often a hitherto unexperienced interest. Nothing prospered about which we had no, or few meetings. We met for our political, scientific, or philanthropic purposes, and they prospered accordingly; and if we did not meet for our peculiar religious purposes, our cause would fall away and die. It was our duty to make an object of these meetings—to make an effort to attend them; not to allow every trifling engagement to interfere with them, but to keep them in view the whole year through, if possible, and to make everything, but duty or necessity, yield to them. We could attend our meetings for general purposes every month, or every week; what would be the hopes of any cause, to promote which we could not meet even once a year? He exhorted every one present then, on that occasion, to be present on the next,—to bring his friend with him, nay, if necessary, *drag* him; for if he dragged him one year, he was sure, when he saw the sympathy which was created in every bosom, and the fresh impulse which was given to the great moral movement that was very dear to us, he would need no force another year, but come readily and willingly. We had a great and noble set of principles to forward; and surely, if they were worth anything, they were worth a little effort on our part. He presumed the Chairman desired that the meeting should be as varied in topic and character as possible, and that he did not wish that it should be on the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. Nevertheless, a

stranger could scarcely find himself in Dublin, and among the people of Eustace-street and Strand-street congregations, without offering them his most hearty congratulations on the escape they were now likely to have from the snares of their enemies, and the spectral alarms of defunct, but resuscitated laws. It was possible, indeed, that they might not come out of the fiery furnace entirely unscathed; but, in comparison with the tender mercies prepared for them, he was sure they would acknowledge the utmost extremity of bad fortune which they were at all likely to encounter, as a blessing and a reprieve. Dr. Parr was once asked, whether he thought the Unitarians would really be damned. He replied, "No, Sir; I do *not* think that they will be *damned*, but I think they will be *scorched* a little." Now, if they thought this a tolerably liberal judgment from a clergyman, whose church required him to read the Athanasian creed over several times a year, they might think themselves well off, in contemplating the utter perdition confidently denounced against them by these Athanasian Dissenters, even if in coming out of the fire of their malice, they did find themselves *scorched* a little. There was an English proverb—and he dared say it was an Irish one also—which declared, that it was better to be in the hands of the cook than in those of the doctor. But they, for the future, would be disposed to reverse that proverb; and they would prefer, henceforth, being in the hands of the great state Doctor in the South, to being in those of the great man Cook in the North. Their domestic relationships they would also be tempted to reconsider, and would, for the future, doubtless prefer, with Mr. Haughton, the cordial and *honest* greeting of a Father Mathew, to the proffered embraces of a brother Matthews. But, burlesque apart, he sincerely congratulated them, not so much on the recovery of their endangered property (though that, no doubt, was a matter of importance to the parties concerned), as on the recovery of their endangered rights and liberties.

The President having read the following resolution, unanimously adopted at the last annual general meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association,—viz. "That this meeting rejoices in the close union and the friendly relations with the Non-subscribing Presbyterians of Ireland, which the common danger, and the common interests in connexion with the profession of Unitarian Christianity have occasioned; that we trust this union, in the bonds of Christian duty and affection, will be strengthened to future advantage by mutual service, so that when the measure of relief, in which we are mutually interested, and towards the success of which our Irish brethren have so largely contributed, shall be carried into law, our churches and their ministers, freed from fears of worldly disturbance, may together be built up in the possession of unsullied Christian truth, and adorned by the growing practice of Christian righteousness,"—

The Rev. Dr. Ledlie rose, and said,—It is now my pleasing duty to ask this meeting cordially to respond to the kind wishes of our brethren in England; and in doing so, I shall not occupy your time

by a lengthened speech. But I would not do justice to my own feelings, did I not advert to some circumstances that, in my mind, render the call that I have made on you imperative. We have been passing through trials of no ordinary kind; and whilst our humble and devout thanksgivings are primarily due to the Father of Mercies, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, for the wonderful deliverance we have experienced, and by means the most unlooked for, we owe a large debt of gratitude to those dear friends who stood by us in the hour of trial, who cheered us by their sympathy, aided us by their unwearied and powerful support, and zealously and affectionately co-operated with us, till we have, I trust, eventually succeeded in establishing our rights and privileges on an immovable foundation. It was my lot, as you are aware, to occupy rather a prominent position, as one of the ministers of the congregation of Eustace-street, in this arduous conflict,—to be selected as an object which it was desirable to assail; and by every means, whether by *secret, cold-blooded dissimulation and hypocrisy*, or by *open, unblushing injustice*, to make me alternately the *dupe* and the *victim* of the most unprincipled conspiracy. Under such circumstances, it was thought advisable that, with my good friend, the Rev. G. A. Armstrong, I should proceed, last year, to London, and try if anything could be done to save us from the impending evil. I was thus brought into more close and intimate correspondence with the leading members of the Unitarian body, and, though holding Arian opinions, whilst theirs were Humanitarian, was received by them with the utmost kindness and cordiality, preached in their pulpits, and was invited, with my other friends of the Irish Deputation, to a public entertainment, where they eagerly listened to the story of our wrongs, and pledged themselves to use their utmost efforts to obtain for us redress—a pledge which they have since faithfully and effectively redeemed. At a much later period, when the dark cloud, that had hung so long and so ominously over us, was likely to burst on our devoted heads, I was most reluctantly compelled to come before the public, and furnish a plain, unvarnished tale of the cruel wrongs which were being perpetrated against us. The statement created a deep interest in various quarters, and our Unitarian friends associated in Manchester and its neighbourhood, in particular, through their worthy and distinguished Chairman, John James Taylor, expressed to me their affectionate sympathy, and generously pledged themselves to aid us in our struggles. I need not say how grateful the expression of these sentiments was to my wearied, and agitated, and exhausted spirit! I must apologise to this meeting, for thus troubling them with my personal feelings. The subject is to me a very painful one. I would try to *forget*, as I hope my religion has taught and enabled me to *forgive*, the injuries—the *deep* and *unmerited* injuries—I have suffered, as well as those that were meditated against mine and me; but I trust I never can forget those pure-minded, enlightened, generous men, who made common cause with us, and stood by our side in the day of our threatened calamity. And now, when the

storm has passed away, and a brighter prospect has opened on our view, shall we not rejoice together, and heartily co-operate in the great and glorious cause of mental freedom, and of pure and undefiled Christianity? I therefore move you, Sir, that we give expression to our feelings by adopting the following resolution:—"That we receive with cordiality, and reciprocate with warmth and sincerity, the resolution of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association."

The Rev. Joseph Hutton seconded the resolution, which was received by the Society with acclamation, and passed unanimously.

Mr. Armstrong, on proposing the next resolution, said, that before he addressed the meeting with a few words on the resolution entrusted to him, he wished to mention a fact of considerable interest. He had that day read a letter in the *Times* newspaper, addressed to the editor, and signed by a scholar of Cambridge University. The writer complained that the Episcopal Church in America had lapsed into heresy, having banished the Athanasian and Nicene creeds from their authorised prayer-book, retaining only the Apostles' Creed, from which even they had expunged the clause, "he descended into hell." The writer also stated that the Articles had been tampered with, to the exclusion of those which affirm the Trinity. Mr. A. then read some extracts he had made from the letter, as it appeared in the *Times*, and stated that he was happy to be able to confirm the writer's charge of heresy against the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, on the authority of the Bishop of New York himself. That prelate had visited Dublin, and, in communication with some of his (Mr. Armstrong's) friends, had fully borne out the accuracy of the statements in the *Times*. Here, then, was a great fact, well deserving a distinguished place among the other *great facts* of the day. Reform had taken place in a most important section of the Episcopal Church; and in what direction had it proceeded? Clearly that of Christian Unitarianism. The Apostles' Creed, which alone had been retained in the American church, was altogether and essentially the belief of the Unitarian; and he (Mr. Armstrong) called the attention of the Trinitarian public to the fact, that the creed nearest to the apostolic age in its composition, and dignified by the very name of the inspired teachers themselves—the eye and ear witnesses, and the chosen and beloved of the divine Jesus himself—was nothing more or less than Christian Unitarianism. Could the Trinitarian answer this?—could he explain it on any other ground than the identity of Unitarianism with the pure, simple, life-giving truths of the gospel, as they gushed at their source from the Rock of Ages? Mr. Armstrong then adverted to the interesting circumstance of this reform having first made its appearance in a church unwedded to the state, and contended, that if the doctrines the Society were so anxious to disseminate had fair play from the votaries of fashion, mammon, and worldly authority, in short, "a clear stage and no favour," they might look for speedy and similar changes in the Anglican churches, and soon find Unitarianism flourishing where Puseyism is now rampant. Mr. Armstrong then observed that, having been

honoured with the offices of President and Secretary, respectively, he had some claims upon the attention of the meeting in what he was about to remark. There never was a time when it was more incumbent to be circumspect in their conduct, as a Society. Recent events had placed them full in the focus of public attention, and if they should be found to evaporate in the fumes of sectarianism, they would be chargeable with a betrayal of their trust, as committed to them by the founders of their Association. It was but yesterday that he (Mr. Armstrong) had been accused of holding the simple humanity of Christ, a doctrine which, as an individual, and speaking personally, he disavowed. But if being a member of the Irish Unitarian Society be a sufficient ground for charging any of its members with holding doctrines which, personally, they do not believe, then the Society must have so far departed from its original principles. This is not a SECTARIAN Association. It is neither Arian nor Humanitarian. It is emphatically the UNITARIAN Society, and has nothing to do with those minor distinctions which have separated Unitarians into sects. True it is, that the great bulk of the Irish Unitarians hold Arian opinions; but to say that, therefore, Unitarianism and Arianism are convertible terms, is untrue. Equally false is it to affirm the same of Unitarianism and a belief in the simple humanity of our Lord. Neither Arianism, therefore, nor Humanitarianism, is of the essence of Unitarian Christianity; and to make them so, is to enact that bigotry which was so ably and eloquently analysed in the powerful and original discourses by which we were at once delighted and edified on Sunday last. Mr. Armstrong then asked pardon for having delayed the meeting so long before speaking more strictly to the resolution he was about to propose. It was one which spoke for itself, and would come home to the heart of every one of them. In their recent struggle for the common rights of Christians, they had experienced no more bitter enemies than the self-styled religious section of the public press. The truculent ferocity of one; the freebooting thirst for plunder of another; the perverted talent, and misused, but tremendous power, of a third; and the wolfishness in sheep's clothing of a certain smoothfaced, insidious morning paper, which was willing to be dubbed *impartial*, had been arrayed against them, and done their hiring well. But, continued Mr. Armstrong, justice and truth were in the midst of us,—a pillar of cloud to our enemies, and a pillar of fire to ourselves to guide us into the harbour of triumph and repose. Nor can we ever forget the powerful allies who generously fought by our side. There was the *Northern Whig*, with its clear, manly, sensible statements, and its scathing powers of exposure,—every line an argument, and every word a truth; the mild, intellectual *Inquirer*, more anxious to persuade than conquer, and ever seeking more after the catholic ends of love, peace, and charity, than sectarian triumph, however brilliant; the scholarly *Evening Post*, with its trenchant criticism, theological lore, independent spirit, and genuine anti-creed-imposing Protestantism; the fiery and enthusiastic *Nation*; and the dauntless

Freeman, at whose unpurchased call 59,000 Catholic citizens of Dublin rose, *en masse*, to record the "deserved respect and esteem in which their Unitarian brethren of this city have been always held," and to implore the legislature to interpose its protecting arms, and shield them from persecution under the mask of religion, and plunder under the form of law. For this spirited and generous advocacy, we owe a debt of gratitude we never can repay, and of which the resolution I shall now propose is but a feeble and partial acknowledgment,—viz. "That the thanks of this Society are due, and hereby presented, to the liberal press of the United Kingdom, and in particular to the editors of the *Northern Whig*, *Dublin Evening Post*, *Leeds Mercury*, *Scotsman*, *Monitor*, *Nation*, *Freeman's Journal*, and *Pilot*, for their generous and spirited advocacy of the rights of Unitarian Christians to legislative protection in the conscientious exercise of their religious liberty."

Mr. Falconer seconded the resolution, which was also received with acclamation, and adopted unanimously.

Mr. Robert Andrews proposed, and Mr. John Strong Armstrong seconded, the next resolution,—viz. "That we view with the highest respect, and gratefully acknowledge the noble exertions of such of our Christian brethren of other denominations as, by their support of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, have assisted in defending and sustaining the great principles of religious liberty, and the rights of conscience;—and we pledge ourselves to manifest our gratitude by increased exertions in carrying out the objects of this Society, and especially those which tend to promote the cultivation of the exalted Christian graces of charity and love, which, as they prevail, will make men, be their creeds ever so diverse, brethren indeed, and establish peace and happiness amongst men." Mr. Andrews expatiated on the assistance Unitarians had derived from Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Presbyterians, in their struggle for protection, which was not to be measured merely by the numbers who had declared for the Bill before Parliament, but also by the numbers of those who had given no opposition,—for those who were not against us were with us. Those, however, who had come forward openly and fearlessly, had taken the manly course which especially entitled them to our respect and admiration. That by the manner in which the Roman Catholics had come forward to maintain the rights of conscience, they had done themselves great credit; and had given, as far as the opportunity afforded, a conclusive answer to the clamour against them, that they are bigots and persecutors; for though none would gain more than they by the rigorous observance of a rule, that the intention of the donor should be observed, they flung aside all such calculations, and, in tens of thousands, proclaimed their detestation of calculating bigots and mercenary persecutors, who, under the pretence of respect for imaginary or unexpressed wishes of the dead, were desirous to harass and oppress, and if possible, crush an opponent; and, at the same time, with masterly wisdom, fill their coffers with the plunder of the living. That the support given by Protestant

Episcopalians showed that they who gave their direct countenance in our favour understood the true principles of the Reformation, the only foundation on which Protestantism can be properly based. But that of all denominations, the few, the noble few, who had magnanimously resisted the wiles and the cajolery and the threats of the Presbyterian High-priests and Elders, and had given their undisguised support to liberty and justice, were perhaps most to be applauded. It is no common emergency that makes men abandon those with whom they ordinarily harmonize and co-operate, but no honorable man could consent to remain even inactively amongst the ranks of those who meditated plunder, and spoliation, and base oppression; and sought to mask these designs under the hypocritical and abominable pretence of love to God, and zeal for his holy religion. What ideas of God and his religion such men might have, we know not! But we know—and we glory in the knowledge—that there were a few, we regret they were so few, amongst our Presbyterian brethren, who rightly knew their duty to God, to their neighbours, and themselves, and knowing this their duty, dared to practise it. And whilst we rejoice in our expected success, we rejoice in it the more that these noble-minded men will in the result be enabled to exult with us—to exult in a triumph which is their victory as well as ours—a success which belongs neither to sect nor party, but is based on a sense of eternal and immutable justice, and will be accomplished by that advancing spirit of civil and religious liberty, which in its progress is destined to crush all persecution, and ultimately to establish, not in name only, but in all its power and reality, the principle of perfect religious equality and freedom—unqualified, universal toleration. Nor will the testimony in favour of right and justice thus given by our valued brethren amongst opposing sects of Presbyterians, entitle them to our respect alone, it will also in due time command the respect of their own fellow-worshippers, and point them out as worthy hereafter of imitation, worthy of being regarded as leaders, when Presbyterians shall discover, that whilst they have largely indulged in abusing others as being priest-ridden, they are themselves the veriest slaves of their clergy, and have since 1829, mutely and tamely submitted to all their acts and decrees,—good, bad, and indifferent. We anxiously look forward to the day when the Presbyterian laity shall resume their rightful place in their congregations, presbyteries, and synods,—when their voices shall be heard again in their councils,—and the power and influence of their clergy shall be again restrained within their proper and legitimate range. Meantime, it is delightful to discover, how far we can fraternize with the exemplarily good and worthy amongst them—to trace, with a brotherly eye, their traits of amiability and virtue, and their manifestations of moral and intellectual advancement, which entitle them to our love and admiration. Mr. Andrews then contrasted the pleasure of dwelling on the good qualities of our brethren of other denominations, with the pain of noticing their imperfections; and that our recent struggle gave

us further proofs how far we could all fraternize for good, whilst each at the same time held firmly his own conscientious convictions. That whilst all were bound to be unsparing in their exposure of meanness, dissimulation, falsehood, and vice, they were also bound to be lenient and forbearing when obliged to bear testimony against unintentional errors, either of the heart or the head, and to be more anxious to discover endowments to prize, and virtues to commend, than errors or imperfections to expose, and vices to condemn. Mr. Andrews then dwelt at some length on the true nature and effect of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill—upon the conduct of the Government, which was beyond their praise—and upon the ever-memorable proceedings of the Legislature. He also dwelt upon the duty of Unitarians upon the occasion, both as members of the society, and as individuals; but as our note of his observations has been given very much from memory, and after a considerable interval, we shall not venture to report further from so faulty a memorial.

The routine business of the society, as to the appointment of officers for the ensuing year, and other similar matters, having been transacted, the meeting was terminated in the usual manner.

The proceedings of the evening were worthy of a society, which, when the attack on their congregational property of Strand-street and Eustace-street had commenced, thus, fearlessly and spiritedly, referred to them, in the Committee's Report of 1842:—"Is it expected that this legal persecution shall make us submit to wear those degrading fetters which we have hitherto spurned? The originators of these proceedings surely know us better than to harbour such an expectation. They ought to know that Christ is our king—that despite their evil designs and contrivances, we shall show ourselves subjects to Christ alone in the great affair of conscience and eternal salvation—and that without fear of man's judgment or man's penalties, we will act as becomes those who wait for the appearance of an impartial Judge, even that King whose kingdom is not of this world."

LETTER FROM MONTREAL.

[The following is the principal portion of a letter lately received from Mr. Benjamin Workman, of Montreal, Secretary of the Unitarian congregation recently organised in that city. The subject on which it treats was also pressed on the attention of the brethren in this country, in a letter addressed by the Montreal Congregation to the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster; but as that letter will be printed in the Minutes of Synod, we think it better to publish the one received from Mr. Workman.]

Montreal, 11th June, 1844.

* * * By the same mail that carries this, will be sent our Annual Congregational Letter to the Remonstrant Synod, addressed to the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, Moneyrea. It contains the short and

simple annals of our infant church; and also an appeal to Synod, to take up the question of a Mission in Canada. Permit me to make a few remarks on this matter, and bear with me if I trespass a few minutes on your time in doing so. The subject lies near my heart, and I feel as if I would be coming short of my duty, were I not to use efforts for its accomplishment. And, first, the zeal of the Unitarians of the United States has carried liberal Christianity from the shores of the Atlantic to the banks of the Mississippi, while the apathy of British Unitarians has left British America totally destitute. Is not this a humiliating fact? Why should the mother fall so far behind her daughter? Add to this the fact, that thousands of our brethren have been cast upon our shores by emigration, and are destitute of the public ordinances of religion; that, in this point of view, emigration is actually draining away our numbers, and adding to our Orthodox sects; that those who do not join the Orthodox, fall into a state of indifference,—in too many instances into immorality, and in some instances into infidelity. I feel confident, that hundreds of our brethren in this colony are pouring out the wishes of their hearts for the ministry and doctrines of their fatherland, and are ready to receive missionaries. The zeal and joy with which those of our communion, in this city, gathered around Mr. Cordner, is a proof that there are, latent, in Canada, materials on which a liberal Colonial Church may be founded. To our parent must we look for needful help,—for missionaries, not preaching the mere cold abstractions of divinity, but the more vital truths of a Saviour who is before Abraham, and who proceeded from the Father. There are several places where a missionary would find Unitarian brethren ready to receive him. On casting my eye over an extract, made by a friend of mine, from the last census of Upper Canada, I find a number of Unitarians returned as residing in the city of Toronto; and also in the township of Westmeath, in the Bathurst district; in the township of Stamford, in the Niagara district; in the township of Thorold, in the same district; and in the town of Niagara. The Christian denomination number about 1,600, and would extend to us the hand of fellowship; as would also the Bible Christians, numbering probably more than 600, in the Upper Province. But a very small portion of our Unitarian brethren have had the courage to report themselves as belonging to the sect every where spoken against; I feel confident—I had almost said certain—they are much more numerous than any official statistics exhibit them to be. From what I have stated, there are evidently *noecliei* for three or four congregations—one in Toronto, one in Niagara, one in Hamilton (or Stamford, its adjacent neighbour), and one in Westmeath.

In our Congregational Letter, we ask Synod to form a committee to collect information, and report on the expediency of a mission to Canada; but I hope something will be done before these measures can be matured. We want one missionary *now*. He could collect much useful information for the committee alluded to.

He would kindle the latent piety of our brethren into zeal, and would, I think, soon become a settled pastor among us,—probably at Toronto. If our friends will raise funds to support a minister as a missionary for one year, ordain him as an evangelist, and send him out, I am sanguine of success. For the love of the souls of your destitute brethren in Canada, put your hand to this important work. Pray for us; lay our case before your brethren, and engage as many as possible to give us a helping hand. What a field lies open!—a territory large as the Austrian empire—a part of the British dominions, containing a million and a half of inhabitants, and increasing in population with rapidity; some of its large towns doubling their population in ten years, others in fifteen years, and others in twenty. If the case of Canada be taken up now in good earnest, the most satisfactory results may fairly be expected. Men of talents and zeal would be most acceptable. Missionaries that have come to Canada, under the patronage of Orthodox sects, have nearly all found congregations, and become settled pastors. I mention this fact, as affording encouragement to young ministers to look towards Canada.

But the pecuniary support—from whence is it to come? I reply, in part from the members of the mother church, and in part from Unitarians here. We, in Montreal, can do nothing till our chapel is finished; but as soon as that is achieved, it is intended to organize a Central Missionary Society in Montreal. Begin, then, now; constitute a Parent Missionary Society in Ireland, and in due time you will have auxiliary co-labourers in Canada, and part of your funds may be found here soon after the first seed is cast into our ground.

In conclusion, I would leave the infant church in Montreal, its difficulties, its efforts, its sacrifices, its enterprise, and resolution, on your mind. We wish to work while it is called to-day; we would not leave truth's sacred labour for another generation, but do it *now*. Come to our aid, and, by the blessing of God, this fair land will soon hear of the one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.

BENJAMIN WORKMAN.

To ————

SOIREES AT HOLYWOOD AND BALLYCARRY.

HOLYWOOD.—On Tuesday evening, August 27th, a very numerous and respectable party met in the Shore-street Meeting-house, Holywood, for the purpose of congratulating each other on the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill into an act. Prayer was offered, before tea, by the Rev. C. J. M'Alester; and after tea, on the motion of George Mitchell, Esq. seconded by John Suffern, Esq. Counsellor Allen was called to the chair. The Chairman, on taking the chair, and in the course of the evening, made many appropriate observations, and gave some interesting

details respecting the progress of the Bill, which had come to his knowledge as a member of one of the Irish deputations on the subject. The first sentiment given from the chair was, "The Queen,—may she long reign over a free, happy, and united people;" after which the national anthem was sung with great taste and judgment. Sentiments were then given in succession, expressing thanks to her Majesty's Ministers, and to the members of Parliament who supported our bill of rights; to the members of the several deputations from our churches; to the friends of religious liberty in Bangor, who were the first in the General Assembly to raise their voices against threatened spoliation;—which were responded to by the Rev. F. Blakely, the Chairman, and J. White, Esq. of Ballyholme. The following sentiments were afterwards given:—"Doctor Montgomery,—our thanks for his valuable labours in the cause of religious liberty, our congratulations on his recovery, and our warmest wishes for his health and happiness;" to which Doctor Montgomery spoke at some length, and with much effect. "Our Christian Brethren,—may we all, while we maintain our own principles, exercise charity and forbearance to those who differ from us;" responded to by the Rev. Hugh Moore. "The glorious triumph of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, by which the religious freedom of our own, and of other denominations, has been secured;" briefly acknowledged by the Rev. J. K. Montgomery, in the absence of the Rev. J. Scott Porter, who was to have spoken to it. "Our Brethren of the Roman Catholic, and the various Protestant churches, who signed petitions in favour of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill;" replied to by Mr. Hugh K. Greenfield, of Craigavad. "An honest and independent press,—the enemy of oppression, and the bulwark of liberty; and especial thanks to the *Northern Whig*, for its consistent, zealous, and efficient advocacy of the people's rights." Mr. Wylie then proposed thanks to the ladies and gentlemen from Belfast, who had honoured us with their company,—and some of whom had contributed so much, by their singing, to the evening's enjoyment. Robert Alexander, Esq. was then moved to the chair, and the usual vote of thanks passed to Mr. Allen. The proceedings were terminated by the singing of the Dismissal Hymn.

BALLYCARRY.—On Thursday evening, August 29, a numerous and respectable assemblage met together at tea, in the Remonstrant Meeting-house, Ballycarry, for the purpose of congratulating each other on the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. Tea having been served, on the motion of the Rev. Mr. Glendy, seconded by Mr. M'Bride, James Barnett, Esq. was called to the chair. The Chairman, after making some appropriate observations on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, gave, in succession—"The Queen;" "Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family;" "The Lord Lieutenant, and prosperity to Ireland." He then gave, "Civil and religious liberty all over the world." The Rev. George Hill spoke to this sentiment, and illustrated the principles of religious liberty. He observed, they must make a good use of

the blessings they had received. He could not, for his part, see why they should rejoice so much in being permitted to retain their houses of worship, if they never entered their walls. They should, therefore, show that they felt the blessings that had been conferred on them by the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, by strictly attending to the ordinances of their holy religion. The Chairman said, the next sentiment on the list was the measure, the passing of which had brought them together—"The Dissenters' Chapels Bill,—may its good fruits be as abundant as its friends hope, and its enemies fear." Dr. Montgomery having been called on, rose, and after some introductory remarks, described the condition of the Synod of Ulster when he first entered the ministry. He detailed the circumstances connected with the separation of the Remonstrants, and stated that they had retired with the perfect understanding, that they were to remain in possession of their properties, rights, and privileges. Well, having retired, he had no apprehension that an attempt would have been made to disturb them in those properties; he did not believe that any number of men could be found to enter into a solemn compact with a number of their brethren, and have the hardihood, in a few years, to come before the world and deny it. He then went on to say, that he could not avoid congratulating them on the success of the Bill; however, they did not come there to celebrate a triumph, but to thank their fellow-Christians for their kind assistance in obtaining for them their rights, to express their gratitude to Almighty God for his over-ruling providence, as regarded them; and to show, that while they were zealous, as far as their own views were concerned, they entertained brotherly love and charity towards their neighbours. The Chairman afterwards gave, "Her Majesty's Ministers;" "The Remonstrant Synod of Ulster;" "The Presbytery of Antrim;" "The progress of Education, and Sunday-school Education in particular;" and various other sentiments, which were responded to by the Revds. N. Porter, C. Porter, T. Smith, and W. Glendy, and Dr. M'Henry.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our correspondents must bear with us for omissions, in our present number, of various communications, as well as Notices of Books, which we have been compelled to keep back, that we might publish the report of the Irish Unitarian Society.

We perceive that, in our last number, page 303, third line from top, "scripturous" has been printed instead of "rapturous."

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepa'd) to the Rev. C. J. M'Alister, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 26, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE
BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. XI.

NOVEMBER, 1844.

VOL. VI.

LIFE AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM PENN.

BY THE REV. R. E. B. MACLELLAN.

(Continued from page 834.)

AFTER the expiration of this third imprisonment, Penn, in the exercise of his ministry, travelled into Holland and Germany; and a few years subsequent, in company with the renowned George Fox, the founder of the sect of Quakers, and the no less celebrated Robert Barclay, the apologist of the sect, he revisited the same countries; thus asserting another resemblance to the Apostle Paul, not only that he was called before councils for the Gospel's sake, but moreover that "he laboured more abundantly than they all." Finding on his return that the persecution of the Dissenters continued to rage, notwithstanding their numerous petitions to parliament for sufferance and protection, William Penn now turned his thoughts and wishes towards a settlement in America, where he and his friends might enjoy their religious opinions without molestation, and where an example might be set to the nations, of a just and righteous government. "There may be room there," said Penn, "though not here, for such a holy experiment." Consequently, the government of the day being indebted to his late father in the sum of £1,600, he requested that in lieu of the money, he should receive an equivalent grant of land in our North American possessions, and this request being acceded to, here was the origin of the important State of Penn-Sylvania. In the year 1602, Penn embarked for the new world; not on an enterprise of glory, or of commerce, or of fortune, or of curiosity, or of warlike renown; but on the divine mission

of conscience, and freedom, and love. To his little company may be applied the stirring stanza—

“What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the main?
The wealth of seas? the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!
Aye—call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to worship God!”

The constitution of the new settlement was marked by many peculiarities, far in advance of that age, and far in advance, if not of the theory, at least of the practice, even of our own age; and which at once demonstrated the high-toned and wide-spread philanthropy by which the bosom of Penn was continually tenanted. One of these peculiarities was, the granting by charter of a greater degree of religious liberty than had previously been known in the world, and a much greater degree also, than can for many years be secured in this country. The enactment is, “All persons living in this province, who confess and acknowledge the One almighty and eternal God to be the Creator, Upholder, and Ruler of the world, and that hold themselves in conscience obliged to live peaceably and justly in civil society, shall in no wise be molested or prejudiced for their religious persuasion or practice in matters of faith and worship; nor shall they be compelled at any time to frequent or *maintain* any religious worship, place, or ministry, whatsoever, contrary to his or their mind, or to do or suffer any other act or thing contrary to their religious persuasion.” This is a pinnacle of freedom of conscience to which we have not yet attained. A second peculiarity in the new settlement was the recognition of the great truth, that all punishment to be just should be reformatory; and hence the abolition of all capital punishments, except in cases of murder or treason. One cannot avoid regretting these two exceptions; but even with them, this is a pinnacle of judicial mercy to which we have not yet attained. A third peculiarity in the new settlement was the law passed in 1688; “that the buying, selling, and holding men in slavery, is inconsistent with the principles of the Christian religion.” This is a pinnacle of natural and gospel equity to which we have but

lately attained.' A fourth peculiarity in the original condition of Pennsylvania, and one proving that if its founder had not direct communications from God, he was at least filled with the spirit of Christ—was, that it was founded on the principles of peace. The first colonists deemed all war unlawful; they had therefore no standing armies; they had not even a local militia; there was not a single soldier in the whole land. Yet, for full seventy years, they dwelt in the midst of six warlike, and powerful, and ferocious Indian tribes, without war, without harm, without hurt, without molestation. In the eloquent language of Clarkson, "The Pennsylvanians became armed, though without arms; they became strong, though without strength; they became safe without the ordinary means of safety." Would to God we had twenty Penns around the person of the sovereign! would to God we had but 200 Penns in our house of lords! would to God we had but 300 Penns in our house of commons! Then should the rights of labour be respected; then would commerce be free; then should legislation be not for a class, but for all; then should the ignorant be instructed; then should our criminal law be ameliorated; then should equality of franchise accompany equality of taxation; then should conscience be unfettered; then should war cease out of the land; then should swords be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks; and then should there be nothing to hurt or to destroy in all God's holy mountain!

I had wished to have written of Penn's treaty with the Indians, ratified beneath the shadow of the great elm tree of Shackamaxon—the only treaty between the red man and the Christian not solemnized by an oath, and the only one never violated;—I had wished to have written of his conduct as a son, a husband, and a father, and to have referred to those advices to his wife and children, during his occasional absence, which embody so much practical and evangelical wisdom; but space and time alike forbid. I can only now add that he was governor of Pennsylvania for nearly thirty years, and died in 1718, aged 74, in the hope of that "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

While hoping, believing, knowing, rejoicing, proclaiming that there are good men of every creed, yet when one, as in the present instance, stumbles athwart "the path of the just," and finds that it is "a shining light" which shineth

more and more unto the perfect day;" he naturally inquires to what section of the church of Christ did this godly man pertain? I have already shown that he was a Quaker; I have now to show that he was a Unitarian. In a former part of this article it was stated, that, in the year 1668, William Penn published a treatise called "The Sandy Foundation Shaken:" I may now mention that the full title of the work is—"The Sandy Foundation Shaken; or, those so generally believed and applauded doctrines of one God, subsisting in three distinct and separate persons; the impossibility of God's pardoning sinners, without a plenary satisfaction; and, the justification of impure persons by an imputative righteousness, refuted from the authority of Scripture testimonies and right reason: by William Penn, a builder on that foundation which cannot be moved." The mere rehearsal of the title page of the tract, is sufficient to convince any one who hears me that William Penn was a Unitarian. A Unitarian is not one who believes as I believe; a Unitarian is not one who denies the doctrine of original sin, of election and reprobation, of the atonement, of the eternity of future punishments; a Unitarian is not one who denies the assumed pre-existence or the alleged angelic nature of Christ; and contends for his simple humanity; a Unitarian is one who, believing the gospel to be divine, believes also in one God in one Person; in other words, that "the Father is the only true God," and consequently the only object of religious worship. This Penn believed, and therefore Penn was a Unitarian.

On the appearance of the "Sandy Foundation Shaken," the Bishop of London took especial umbrage at it, and the author was, on the warrant of "Lord Arlington" principal secretary of State, at once apprehended, and sent to the tower. During this imprisonment, he was treated with great and unusual severity, inasmuch that even the visits of his intimate friends and relatives were refused him. Moreover, the bigoted and heartless Bishop of London sent him word he was resolved that Penn should either publicly recant, or *die a prisoner*. The reply again, as much of his conduct before, reminds us of the demeanour and spirit of the great Apostle to the Gentiles: "All is well," said the Captive—"I wish they had told me so before, since the expecting of a release put

a stop to some business. Thou mayest tell my Father (who I know will ask thee) these words; that my prison shall be *my grave*, before I will budge a jot; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man; I have no need to fear. *God will make amends for all.* They are mistaken in me; I value not their threats nor resolutions; for they shall know I can weary out their malice and peevishness; and in me shall they all behold a *resolution* above *fear*; conscience above cruelty; and a baffle put to all their designs, by the spirit of patience, the companion of all the tribulated flock of the blessed Jesus, who is the author and finisher of the faith that overcomes the world; yea, death and hell too. Neither great nor good things were ever attained without loss and hardships. He that would reap and not labour, must faint with the wind and perish in disappointments; but an hair of my head shall not fall without the providence of my Father, that is over all."

Thus refusing to retract, thus determined rather to perish than to deny his heart's convictions, Penn lingered in the tower for seven months: and was then liberated, not from any returning leniency on the part of the state church or its London prelate; not by any exertion of the outraged laws of the land in his favour; but by the intercession with the king, of the Duke of York, afterwards James II. Thus this little tract has glided down to us across the ocean of 200 years, not only as the advised work of one of the salt of the earth, but also bearing with it the sanctity which is ever imparted by persecution. I shall not enter more fully into its contents, as that excellent man, Joseph Barker, has lately published it at a price which places it within the reach of the poorest: but I cannot forbear concluding this article with Penn's "information and caution" respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. "Before I conclude this head, it is requisite I should inform thee, reader, concerning its original. Thou mayest assure thyself it is not from the Scriptures or reason, since so expressly repugnant; although all broachers of their own inventions strongly endeavour to reconcile them with that holy record. Know then, my friends, *it was born above three hundred years after* the ancient gospel was declared; and that through the nice distinctions and too daring curiosity of the Bishop of Alexandria, who being as hotly opposed by Arius, their zeal so reciprocally

blew the fire of contention, animosity, and persecution, till at last they sacrificed each other to their mutual revenge.

"Thus it was conceived in *ignorance*, brought forth and maintained by *cruelty*, for though he that was strongest imposed his opinions, persecuting the contrary, yet the scale turning on the Trinitarian side, it has there continued through all the Romish generations; and notwithstanding it hath obtained the name of Athanasian from Athanasius (a stiff man, witness his carriage towards Constantine the Emperor), because supposed to have been most concerned in the framing that creed in which this doctrine is asserted; yet have I never seen one copy void of a suspicion rather to have been the results of Popish school-men; which I could render more perspicuous, did not brevity necessitate me to an omission.

"Be therefore cautioned, reader, not to embrace the determination of prejudiced councils, for evangelical doctrine; which the Scriptures bear no certain testimony to, neither was believed by the primitive saints, or thus stated by any I have read of in the first, second, or third centuries; particularly Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, with many others, who appear wholly foreign to the matter in controversy. But seeing that private spirits, and those none of the most ingenuous, have been the parents and guardians of this so generally received doctrine; let the time past suffice, and be admonished to apply thy mind unto that light and grace which brings salvation; that by obedience thereunto, those mists tradition hath cast before thy eyes may be expelled, and thou receive a certain knowledge of that God, whom to know is life eternal; not to be divided, but *one pure, entire, and eternal being*; who in the fulness of time *sent forth his son*, as the true light which enlighteneth every man; that whosoever followed him (the light) might be translated from the dark notions and vain conversations of men, to this holy light, in which only sound judgment and eternal life are obtainable: who, so many hundred years since, in person testified the virtue of it, and has communicated unto all, such a proportion as may enable them to follow his example." May we, in doctrine and in practice, follow the "light of the world" whithersoever it leads, knowing that it is indeed a light from Heaven!

ALLEGED DEFECTS OF UNITARIAN PREACHING.

[Delivered as an Address before the Berry-street Ministerial Conference, Boston, May 29, 1844. By Rev. C. Robinson.]

IN using the term *alleged*, in this connexion, it is not intended to intimate that the defects which we are about to consider are *mere* allegations, the groundless charges of ignorance and prejudice. Urged against us, as they have long been, by friends, as well as by foes, and reiterated in every tone of regret, ridicule, reproach, and sarcasm, it would imply a want of humility and candour, not to acknowledge that they may have some slight foundation, at least, in truth. It will be my object at this time to show how far this is the case. Nor will it be deemed, I trust, wholly unsuitable to the occasion of our present meeting, if we employ the few minutes, which are usually assigned to this exercise, in considering whether the defects alluded to in our subject do really exist, and to what extent; and also to inquire, what remedies, if any, can be applied.

We were never, perhaps, in a more favourable situation for instituting inquiries of this kind, than we are at present. We are not now obliged, as we once were, to stand wholly upon the defensive. We have ascertained our position. We have vindicated to ourselves a right to exist; have gained for ourselves a place among our sister denominations. We have become a well-established, prosperous, growing sect, and that too without becoming very deeply infected with the spirit of sectarianism. Our views are spreading themselves as fast as the community are prepared to receive them. The great principles for which we have contended,—freedom of thought, the rights of the individual conscience, the liberty of prophesying, are, notwithstanding some recent appearances to the contrary, steadily progressive—are gaining a stronger and stronger hold upon the general mind, and are destined, we believe, essentially to modify the opinions and feelings of the whole Christian world. What we have now to do, is not to settle principles, but to apply them; to endeavour, first of all, to enter into the spirit, the full significance of the sublime, soul-renewing, soul-gladdening truths to which we have attained; to translate them into our own experience and illustrate them in our lives, and then to urge

them home upon the hearts and consciences of others, with earnestness, sincerity, fervour, and power.

And herein it is, that we are thought to be most deficient. Unitarian preaching is said to be cold and lifeless, wanting in interest and efficacy, wanting in power over the affections, wanting in those solemn and fervid appeals, which touch the heart, awaken the conscience, rouse all the religious sensibilities of our nature. This is an old complaint; yet it comes up from so many different quarters, and is so often repeated, that we cannot refuse to give it a hearing. Admitting then, that it is not wholly groundless, that there is room for improvement here, and need of it, I still maintain, that whatever may have been the case in former times, the charge of coldness and lifelessness is not one to which the Unitarian preaching of the present day is peculiarly liable. I believe that much of the ablest and most effective preaching in the world is now to be heard in many of our Unitarian pulpits. Indeed, it is a subject of frequent remark, that Unitarian preaching is everywhere becoming more serious, more evangelical and spiritual, in the right sense of the words, more animated and soul-stirring. And this is certainly the case; nor, in this regard, do we fall a whit behind those who claim for themselves a monopoly, not only of all the true light, but of all the vital warmth of religion.

Still it cannot be denied that dulness is a besetting sin of the pulpit, and has been from the days of Chrysostom to the present time. "Dull as a sermon," "tedious as a homily," are phrases which have become proverbial in every language throughout Christendom. For a defect so universal, there must be some universal and permanent cause. And it will be found to lie, partly in the subjects which we handle, partly in the materials upon which we act, and partly in ourselves. Our concern now is solely with ourselves, and with ourselves especially as a distinct class of preachers. Without apologizing, then, for indolence and unfaithfulness, which seldom, I believe, exist, I aver again, that our preaching is better than the average, and better in the very point which we are now considering, possessing a more true and hearty fervency both in spirit and manner. It is not, of course, to be expected that we should all be eloquent orators. It is not in the power of some of us to be. We want the requisite gifts,

talents, temperament. Nor can we, at all times, discharge our public duties with the same degree of satisfaction either to ourselves, or to others. They recur at such short intervals, and overtake us in such different states of body and of mind, that to be always equally fresh in feeling, novel in illustration, and energetic in enforcement, is next to impossible. The whole head is sometimes sick, and the whole heart faint, yet the preparations for the pulpit—the full tale of brick must be forthcoming, whether straw can be found or not. And this necessity which is laid upon us to prepare a new discourse for the coming sabbath, or what is harder still, to raise an old one from its grave, often haunts us through the week like a guilty conscience, and troubles our very dreams. And who, among the most gifted of us, are able, on every occasion, in our performances, to work ourselves up to a desired degree of interest, animation, and engagedness? Indeed we should not work ourselves up at all. The warmth we need, should come spontaneously, if it come at all. It should be the result of solemn, earnest, prayerful meditation; the offspring of a faith which clothes its objects with life and reality, which brings the remote near, and renders the unseen present and visible. Like the prophet of old, we should speak in the name of the Lord, not because we must, but because we cannot help it. “His word is in my heart,” should be the feeling of each one of us. “His word is *in* my heart, like a burning fire shut up in my bones. I am weary with forbearing. I cannot refrain.” This is the kind of fervour we need,—not wrought up for the occasion, not caught from sympathy, not an excitement of the nerves,—but the genuine fervour of a believing and earnest spirit, of a heart that is filled and glowing with the love of God, of truth, of virtue, of souls. This is the only warmth which is not factitious, and can never be quenched. It is a species of inspiration; and if we have enough of it, we can never be formal and frigid in our ministrations.

After all, I am free to confess, that I do not consider dulness—a tolerable degree of dulness—as the worst attribute of preaching. Extravagance and exaggeration are worse; a false enthusiasm is worse; an artificial and self-begotten excitement is worse; a flippant sentimentalism is much worse. Indeed the doubt has arisen in many,

minds, whether what is called *exciting* preaching is, on the whole, and in the long run, the most profitable. Its immediate effects may be obvious and striking; but the impression which it produces is often superficial, and soon passes away; and when after a long course of such preaching we come to inquire for the fruits, they are frequently found to be anything but those of the spirit, "goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Besides, such preaching is too apt to be sought for and rested on as an end. It is too apt to be depended upon, not as a means of grace, but as grace itself, and ministering grace to the hearers, whether applied and improved by them or not. The strong emotion, the glow of feeling which it awakens, is thought, in many cases, to be all that is needed, is made a substitute for watchfulness, prayer, and personal effort; so that it is by no means an uncommon thing, to find faith dying out, and morality and vital godliness running to a low ebb, in those churches which are blessed with the most powerful ministrations.

It cannot be denied, I think, that some of the most useful ministers among us, some who have the strongest hold upon the affections of their people, who remain the longest in their places, and the influence of whose labours is the most permanent and beneficial, are what may be considered dull preachers. They make no noise; they produce little or no excitement. They feed their flocks with wholesome, but unstimulating food. Their speech drops upon them like the rain, and distils like dew, and after many days, the effect of their labours is seen, in the silent and unobserved growth of the Christian virtues and graces, among those to whom they minister. Such facts (and they are numerous) almost lead us to call in question the value of what is so much prized and coveted, at the present day, namely, the power in a minister, of intensely interesting and exciting his auditory.

Let us covet the best gifts; but let us not be overanxious to be thought powerful and stirring preachers. Let us not be tempted, for the sake of present effect, to resort to modes of appeal and influence which are not accordant with our tastes and feelings, merely because they are seen to be so effective in other hands. Why should we hanker after a system of measures, which those who have tried it the most effectually, and have witnessed its results,

are now the foremost to repudiate and condemn? Why should we, any one of us, wish to put on the cast-off garments of Orthodoxy? We have a mission of our own to fulfil; and it is different, in some respects, from that of any other class of Christians. It is ours to act upon the intellect of the people, upon their moral and religious *ideas*, and, through these, upon their sensibilities and sympathies. We know not how to persuade, till we have first enlightened and convinced. All craft, therefore, and management, all attempts to produce an unhealthy excitement of feeling, are quite out of place with us. It belongs to us not to yield to any of the morbid tendencies of the times, but to do as much as in us lies to resist and check them. We have from the beginning maintained an attitude, at once reformatory and conservative; recognizing and adopting the great principle of progress, yet reverencing and holding fast to all that is true and good in old opinions and usages. Let us still maintain this attitude, and be willing to forego all those modes of appeal and means of influence, however effective they may be thought, which we cannot use in entire good faith, and which, whatever they may be in other hands, can be with us little else than a species of empiricism. Let us not give in to any practices, which are felt to be inconsistent with what may be called the spirit and genius of our sect. The time is far distant, I trust, when there will be any essential departure from the honesty and fair dealing, the good sense, the correct taste, the sober practical wisdom, the sound and healthy moral tone, which have so long and so honourably distinguished the Unitarian pulpit. Let us be true to our mission; let us adhere faithfully to our distinctive peculiarities; labouring, as best we may, to unfold, illustrate, enforce, and apply the great vital truths embodied in our faith, and we shall be able, with the blessing of God, to build up, in fair proportions and symmetrical form, a true Christian temple.

(*To be continued.*)

TEETOTALISM.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

DEAR SIR,—The progress of Teetotalism having been most satisfactory in this neighbourhood during the past six months, I expect a short account of it will prove

agreeable and useful to your readers: agreeable, because of its cheering evidence of the steady advance of our people in habits of social order, and domestic comfort; useful, because of the encouragement it must afford to those at a distance, whose hearts are warmed by an ardent and soul-enlivening zeal for the promotion of one of the most glorious reformatory which has ever come with "healing on its wings," to bless and elevate mankind. Useful, perhaps, in another sense, if it shall have the effect of making any who are careless, or indifferent, or lukewarm, in the promotion of human happiness, feel that it is full time for them to awake from their criminal apathy, and devote some of their talents and their future time, in promoting the happiness and the virtue of their fellow-men. The more of my leisure I devote, and the more of my thoughts I give, to this great question, Teetotalism, the more I am satisfied of the truth and value of its principles, and of their power to bless my country and the world; and the more I am astonished that the disgusting and degrading drinking customs of society should be still permitted, by enlightened men, to hold them as slaves to a sensual appetite, which is not only destructive of health, but which so poisons the moral feelings of its votaries, as to make them blind to the Christian duty of making some sacrifices for the good of others. I do not think the consumers of intoxicating drinks, in the present day, can free themselves from that imputation, by any other means than in their total abandonment; for so copious a flood of light has been shed abroad on the subject, that no sane individual can now plead ignorance of their destructive effects, both on the health and the morals of society; neither can any man avoid beholding all around him, in the cheerful looks of thousands of his fellow-men, and in the generally improved condition of society at large, the wondrous and most glorious effects already produced in our country, by the labours of the good Father Mathew. With all these abounding evidences, in attestation of the value of Teetotalism, it seems to me most unaccountable, that the gentry and clergy of Ireland should continue to stand aloof from this blessed movement, which is giving security to the possessions of the former class, and which is the best auxiliary the latter ever had, in assisting them to

promote that religion of peace and love, of which they profess themselves the teachers; but of which they are blind teachers indeed, so long as they neglect to use every means in their power to extirpate drunkenness from the land. I am at a loss to conceive how those who continue to use intoxicating drinks, and who countenance practices which inevitably lead to drunkenness, and every species of demoralization and misery, can justify their acts to their country and their God; how they can answer at the bar of Heaven, when they are asked why they indulged in habits which did more to render man unfit for the joys of Paradise, than any other practice in which men indulge;—in customs, which send sixty thousand of our fellow-men in these lands, annually, to the drunkard's grave;—customs, which spread desolation and misery over the hearts and houses of thousands of families;—customs, which demonize parents, and which subject children to the vilest and worst influences;—customs, which fill the world with lamentation and woe; crowding our jails, and our lunatic asylums with hapless victims;—customs, which make the overthrow of our reason—that most glorious attribute of our nature—seem a light and trivial offence against the Majesty of Heaven. I am, indeed, at a loss to conceive how educated men and women can any longer delay coming to the conclusion, that it is their bounden duty to come forward as the active supporters of teetotalism, — of that principle which is sure to effect abundant good, and cannot produce any evil at all. It is the only remedy yet discovered, for the complete and certain eradication of the evil it contends against; of one of the greatest evils which curse the world. But I have wandered away from my original intention, which was, to give you some account of the progress of teetotalism in this city during the past six months. I am happy to be able to say, that, among the people, a fine enthusiasm in favour of this noble movement prevails; and that the admirable spirit they exhibit is well sustained by an excellent clergyman (the Rev. Doctor Spratt), who has thrown his heart and soul into the cause, and who has been instrumental in adding many thousands to our ranks. If one such zealous co-operator with Father Mathew were found in every parish in Ireland, we would soon hear little of pledge-

breaking in our country; for all our people would soon be a united body of staunch teetotallers.

Father Spratt's mode of proceeding is as follows:—He calls open-air meetings each alternate Sunday evening, in different parts of our city and its environs; at each of these meetings, very many thousands of the people attend,—about ten thousand have taken the pledge at them, within six months; and the good priest is literally besieged at his house by persons who call on him daily, to shake off their chains, and become free men. At these meetings, temperance advocates attend, and address the people; all topics of a political or sectarian nature are prohibited and avoided. We are faithful followers of Father Mathew, who wishes to make the temperance platform free to all men who love teetotalism, and who advocate its healing principles, which proclaim with the heavenly host, "Peace on earth, and good will to men." I wish, my dear Sir, that open-air teetotal meetings were frequently held in every town and village in Ireland; the machinery for conducting them is simple: a platform for the speakers, and notice given of the place and hour of meeting, are all that is necessary; with these, and simple earnestness of manner, to make our sincerity apparent to all men, great good would be effected by teetotal advocates. I am happy to say that a drunkard is now an unusual sight in our city. Drunkard makers still hold out their lures, so that some are yet caught, and drawn on to destruction; going into eternity before their destroyers, there to be a witness against them—there to demand of them a reason why they sought to enrich themselves on earth, by rendering their fellow-men unfit for heaven. I wish the hearts of brewers, and distillers, and wine-merchants, and publicans, and consumers of intoxicating drinks, could be touched by considerations of this nature; and these men induced no longer to derive wealth and fancied enjoyment, but ultimate and lasting pain, by dealing in the miseries of their fellow-men. There is a Chinese proverb to this effect: "That no injury can be done to the meanest individual, without producing injury to all men." If this be true (and who will deny its truth?) are not venders and consumers of intoxicating drinks, mischief-makers-general? and, in a sound or virtuous state of society, would they not be frowned out of coun-

tenance by their fellow-men? Unfortunately, their occupation and their practice are yet looked upon as respectable, just as man-stealing is considered lawful in the slave states of America, merely because an immoral feeling pervades society. But a better day is coming; the clergy and the gentry will yet open their eyes to the false position they occupy (there are a few noble exceptions to this rule among them), as regards teetotalism. It is idle of them to say we preach and we practice moderation; even if this were true (which it is not in thousands of instances), it would avail nothing, in the face of the world's evidence, that drunkenness and all its woes spring from moderate drinking, as surely as night follows day, or as the harvest comes after seed-time. It is but a futile excuse, to gloss over their own neglect of duty towards their fellow-men, which cannot abide the test of Christian truth and charity. For the community which indulges in the use of intoxicating drinks, must know to an absolute certainty, that thousands out of its ranks will be plunged into misery and woe, in consequence of such use; and that crime and unutterable desolation will be its sure results. It is, therefore, on common sense, as well as on Christian principles, the duty of every man, in every community, to get rid, as quickly as possible, of such an enemy to its peace and happiness. How anxiously we guard against the plague or the cholera, and yet these evils are but as a drop in the ocean, in comparison with the desolating effects produced by the use of strong drinks.

One word in parting, to my Unitarian Christian brethren. Great and serious responsibility rests upon us; we have come out from among our other Christian brethren, on the ground that we consider their profession of the truth erroneous. If we do not prove, by the practice of our lives, that our views have a greater tendency than theirs, to make mankind virtuous and happy, what is the value of our dissent? "A tree is known by its fruit." Is an alcohol-drinking Unitarian Christian giving such an example to his fellow-man, as is likely to promote genuine Christianity either at home or abroad? I wish every Unitarian Christian to ask himself and herself that question; for surely the sole object of our being on earth is not to live upon the fat of the land,

regardless of the woes and the crimes of our fellow-men. I do not say that our Christian body stands chargeable with this imputation in any especial manner. I believe the contrary is the fact,—that, as a class, we can stand a comparison with many others; but this is small praise. Should not each one of our numbers be a teetotaler? Is not the principle well calculated to promote peace, and happiness, and Christian charity upon earth? and, if so, should we not all be enrolled among its warm advocates? It will not, of itself, make man happy and virtuous; but surely it is a good foundation on which to secure many blessings for our race.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

34, Eccles-st. Dublin, Oct. 1844. JAMES HAUGHTON.

CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY, like a little child, goes wandering over the world. Fearless in its innocence, it is not abashed before princes, nor confounded by the wisdom of synods. Before it, the blood-stained warrior sheathes his sword, and plucks the laurel from his brow;—the midnight murderer turns from his purpose, and, like the heart-smitten disciple, goes out, and weeps bitterly. It brings liberty to the captive, joy to the mourner, freedom to the slave, repentance and forgiveness to the sinner, hope to the faint-hearted, and assurance to the dying.

It enters the huts of poor men, and sits down with them and their children; it makes them contented in the midst of privations, and leaves behind an everlasting blessing. It walks through great cities, amid all their pomp and splendour, their unimaginable pride, and their unutterable misery, a purifying, ennobling, correcting, and redeeming angel.

It is alike the beautiful companion of childhood, and the comfortable associate of age. It ennobles the noble, gives wisdom to the wise, and new grace to the lowly. The patriot, the priest, the poet, and the eloquent man, all derive their sublimest power from its influence.

Thanks be to the eternal Father, who has made us one with him, through the benign spirit of Christianity.

MARY HOWITT.

ORIGINAL POETRY.
EDEN AND GETHSEMANE.

I saw a garden—and there grew
Gorgeous things of every hue;
Flowers of varied form and dye,
To please the sense and charm the eye.
All things that bloom with lustre bright
Shone in that paradise of light;
Sweet fragrance filled the gladdened air:
No leaf was seared—no stem was bare.
The palm-tree reared its tuft on high;
The cedar aimed to reach the sky;
Bananas spread their ample shade—
Beneath that shade a bower was made.
And greater things than these were seen:—
The TREE OF LIFE's immortal green!
The TREE OF KNOWLEDGE—this revealed
What Heaven at first in mercy sealed.
Wo! wo! to those who dare to taste!
Their paradise becomes a waste—
A howling wilderness of sin,
We turn away, and look within:
Oh, yes! while all things yet are fair,
Thought revels in that garden there!
Not trees alone of height and power,
Here give delight: the rosy bower
Exhales around its sweet perfume,
And rivals beauty's fairest bloom.
Their scent the gorgeous lilies shed;
The modest violet hides its head;
The starry cereus, clothed in white,
Gives its pale beauty to the night!
The star of eve, shine as she will,
Views in this plant a rival still.
And must the morning find it dead—
Its radiance gone—its perfume fled,—
As in *this sinful world* we see
Beauty, and truth, and glory flee?
Not so:—for, lo! in that sweet place
Death may not with his finger trace

His gloomy form on plant or flower,
 Where innocence has reared her bowers.
 But let by day the dew-drops keep
 This flower to wake when others sleep.

And here are plants that grow for food,
 Their Maker's word pronounced them good.
 How graceful hangs the clustering vine,
 Whilst round its stem the tendrils twine.
 As various plants the eye delight,
 So luscious fruits the taste invite.
 Sweet fragrance fills the gladdened air,
 And life is in that garden there:
 The glittering insect spreads the wing,
 And merry birds, delighted, sing:
 The lamb skips by the lion's side,
 Nor fears he yet his haughty pride:
 The eagle seeks no living prey;
 No greedy vulture tracks his way,
 Nor death, nor war, nor strife there move—
 The harmless serpent kissed the dove:
 The breathing air is full of love!

Two sinless beings came in view,
 And marked the sweets that round them grew
 Then gazed upon each other's face,
 Enchanted with their mutual grace.
 But more within their hearts they found—
 Fountains of joy and love abound;
 Streams of eternal, fond delight,
 By fancy pictured fair and bright:
 No outward joy can equal find
 To the rapt pleasures of the mind.
 How true, how pure their love appears—
 No selfish thoughts—no jealous fears.
 To love—and their great Maker praise,
 Thus, tranquil, passed these early days!

But, not for ever raptures move
 To joys divine their heavenly features;
 For discord came, and chased the love
 That once rejoiced these blessed creatures:

And sin, o'er all that looked so fair,
 Sent, howling round, its sudden blight;
 And, where sweet peace and beauty were,
 Reign'd death's cold gloom and withering night!

No more the wolf and sheep agree;
 The lambkins from the lions flee;
 The worm is at the cedar's root;
 Corruption taints the luscious fruit.
 The beauteous bird expires in death,
 And yields, with pain, its parting breath!
 The plants decay,—the blossoms fall;
 And sear and desolate is all
 That bloomed so fair—that shone so bright,
 And beamed with glory, love, and light!
 So disobedience, sin, and strife,
 Poisoned the springs of hope and life.

* * * *

I saw a garden—'twas a calm retreat;
 A place where wisdom might retire to muse,
 And contemplation for companion choose;
 Or persecuted virtue find a seat;
 And for herself in safety there create
 Bright images of God—and heavenly love—
 All that fair truth inspires, and virtue may approve!
 Within that garden three men weary lay,
 Sleeping for sorrow—for the flesh was weak,
 And grief was stamped upon each manly cheek.
 Imagination guides a little way,
 And what do we behold? One prays alone,
 And bows his spirit down before the Eternal throne!
 And may we gaze on him whom angels viewed
 With holy rev'rence, looking from the sky,
 And owned in him the Son of God most high,
 Nor dared unbidden on his grief intrude.
 What though with ardent, yearning soul, they wait
 To bring him solace in his low estate!
 "Thou Jesus prays—thou his obedient voice,—
 "Father, permit this cup to pass away."
 He rises then—again returns to pray,—
 "Father, thy will, not mine, I make my choice."

Enough—the flesh is conquered; now the soul
Has given all to God.—He reigns without control!

Now goes he forth—for him subjection gains
A crown of glory;—but he first must wear
A crown of thorns, and imprecations hear,
And insults win, and death, before he reigns—
Prince, Mediator, Judge of man—a friend—
Eternal friend to souls for whom he bled!

Oh! what is Eden, then, compared with thee,
Thou lonely, dark, but blessed Gethsemane!

M. B.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

THE DEADLY NIGHTSHADE.

Two lovely little children went, when summer was in prime,
Into a garden beautiful, beneath a southern clime;
A brother and a sister—twins, and each to each most dear,—
Was not the mother of these babes beset with any fear?

And brightly shone the summer sun upon that gentle pair,
Who plucked each gaudy flower that grew in rich profusion there,
Or chased the idle butterflies—those fair defenceless things,
That round them tantalizing danced upon their silken wings.

With many a flower which they had plucked, a mimic grove they
made,
But wondered, when they came again, they had so soon decayed;
And grieving, each the other asked, why all the roses fed,
Which freshly bloomed an hour before, now, drooping, hung their
head?

'Twas in the season of the year, when, on the blooming earth,
Each flower, and plant, and shrub, and tree, to all their fruits give
birth;

But, 'mid them all, and most exposed, to catch the passing view,
With purple flowers and berries red, the Deadly Nightshade grew!

Up rose the little boy and ran, upon the bush to gaze,
And then his sister followed quick, and both were in amaze;
For berries half so beautiful they ne'er before had seen,
So forth he rashly stretched his hand among the branches green.

"Oh, Edward! Edward! do not touch. Remember, mother said,

That poisonous fruit in clusters grew, though beautiful and red,
And that it hath a tempting look, inviting to the eye ;
But if a single one we eat, that we shall surely die."

"Oh! dearest sister, do you think that these can do us harm,
Or that such pretty fruit as this need cause us such alarm?
For surely if they poisonous are, they bitter then must be,
So I will taste a single one, and we shall quickly see!"

Then forth he stretched his little hand, and he a berry plucked,
And to his lips he put the fruit, and all the poison sucked ;
And when he found the juice was good, he bade his sister eat,
For it was pleasant to the taste—so cooling and so sweet.

These children then the berries pulled, and of them ate their fill,
Nor did they ever dream the while that they were doing ill.
" 'Tis not this fruit that mother meant," exultingly they cried;
And merry was their frequent laugh to see their fingers dyed.

But suddenly the sister stopped, her rosy cheek grew pale,—
"Oh, brother! brother! hold me up, for something doth me ail.
I feel so weak, I cannot stand—the trees are dancing round ;
Oh, Edward, dearest! clasp my hand, and place me on the ground."

He gently laid his sister down, and bitterly did cry,
And every means to ease her pain, and calm her fears, did try ;
But soon he felt himself turn sick, and feeble—chilly—weak ;
And as he tottered on the grass, he bruised his sister's cheek.

Exhausted though the brother was, upon his tender breast
He placed the little Charlotte's head, that she might softer rest ;
He moved her gently, thinking that his sister only slept,
And when his eyesight dimmer grew, to her he closer crept.

As evening closed upon these babes, their spirits passed away,
And underneath the leafy bough so peacefully they lay,
That those who had the sacred trust, these children dear to
keep,
Beheld them in their calm repose, but thought they were asleep."

And when the loving pair were raised from that last fond embrace,

A half-formed smile was seen to dwell upon each paly face,
 Alas! that such twin roses fair, which morning saw in bloom,
 Should wither in that sunny land, ere came the twilight gloom.

From "Hymns and Poems for Children."

INTELLIGENCE.

MINISTRY AT LARGE, BOSTON, U.S.

IT must be a source of the highest gratification to every Christian or benevolent heart, to perceive that the ministry among the poor, which only a few years ago was undertaken in this city as an experiment, has proved its capacity of usefulness even beyond the hopes of many of its early friends. It may now be considered one of the established charities of Boston, and certainly not one of the least efficient methods of beneficence which a Christian spirit has devised. The debt by which the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches had been prevented from extending their plans having been discharged by the successful efforts of the ladies of the New South Church, followed by the liberality of gentlemen in our different congregations, the board have felt themselves justified in appointing a third Minister at Large, to labour in connexion with Messrs. Sargent and Waterson. Rev. Warren Burton has accepted the appointment, and began his service on the first of August. The success which has attended on such a ministration of the gospel here, has led to its introduction in other cities. In Providence, R. I. Rev. Mr. Harrington, who has been engaged in this work for two years or more, having accepted an invitation to Albany, Mr. William G. Babcock of Boston, recently from the Cambridge Divinity School, has been appointed his successor. In Baltimore, Md. Rev. Mr. Dall has been for more than a year engaged in this work. In Louisville, Ky. a Ministry to the poor has been recently established by members of the Unitarian Society, and Mr. William S. Farmer of Boston, who has just finished his preparatory studies, has undertaken the office. In St. Louis, Mo. the Unitarian congregation have established a similar ministry, under the care of Mr. M. De Lange, who has been pursuing his professional studies with Rev. Mr. Eliot. The whole expense in this instance, including the salary of the minister, the support of two day-schools for the children of the poor, and the sum granted to "the poor's purse," is about 1,200 dollars a year; all of which is contributed by the pastor and members of this young congregation. In Lowell, Mass. an attempt has recently been made, with entire success, to introduce a Ministry at Large into that city, and Rev. Mr. Nightingale, formerly of Athol, has been appointed to the work.

MISSIONARY FUND, U. S.

The first financial year of the Board of Missions from our Unitarian churches, closed in May, 1844. The Committee, through their Treasurer, Hon. Stephen Fairbanks, reported, at the public meeting of the American Unitarian Association on the 28th of May, that their endeavours had been so far successful. The sum that it was contemplated to raise among the churches was ten thousand dollars. The sum actually raised was ten thousand and ninety-two dollars. A part of this had been received with specific directions for its appropriation; the remainder was distributed to the American Unitarian Association, the Society for the Promotion of Theological Education, and the Evangelical Missionary Society. Encouraged by the success of the first year's effort, the committee have entered on the second year with a zealous determination to increase the missionary fund, and for this purpose have appointed a travelling agent.

BOLTON DISTRICT UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The autumn half-yearly meeting of the religious association bearing the above title, was held in this town on Thursday last, in the afternoon, at Bank-street Chapel. The Rev. Mr. Clark, of Chorley, conducted the preliminary services, and the Rev. C. R. Hubbard preached. At the close of the service, the congregation and friends repaired to the Temperance Hall, where an excellent tea repast was prepared for them, and to which nearly 300 persons sat down. There was a preponderance of ladies; among the company were ministers and friends from the neighbouring places connected with the Association. We observed the Rev. J. Harrison, Ph. D. of Chowbent; Rev. F. Howarth, of Bury; Rev. James Whitehead, Ainsworth; Rev. H. Clark, of Chorley; Rev. C. Wallace, Altringham; Rev. C. R. Hubbard, Rivington; and Rev. J. Ragland, Hindley; E. Shawcross, Esq. Manchester, &c. The Rev. J. Ragland, of Hindley, asked a blessing; and tea was then dispensed by a committee of ladies, assisted by some of the younger members of the Bank-street Congregation. The social meal being concluded, a hymn was sung.

The Rev. F. Baker, who occupied the chair, in opening the proceedings, said, this was the thirty-eighth meeting of their Association, and he was happy to say that there was every reason for coming to the conclusion that it was not in a dying state. In fact, he (Mr. Baker) really thought that this was the best meeting they had ever held in Bolton—the most numerous, and, so far as it had gone, actuated by the very best spirit. They might disregard the sneers of rival sectaries around them, when they saw themselves thus encouraged, not only by increasing numbers at home, but also by the countenance and co-operation of most of the congregations of the district, from which there were present many who had

travelled several miles for the purpose of attending the meeting. With such indications, they could not but feel encouraged to go forward. Their meetings had been productive of great sociability. When he first came into the district, he found the members of the different congregations comparatively unknown to each other. Not that he considered sociability yet carried so far as it ought to be; but this he would say, that the spirit of social union was materially increased among them, and they had only to communicate that spirit to others, who had not yet come forward, to carry out still further the great object they had in view. That object was not merely assembling themselves together to speak, or to hear others speak. It was one of a higher character. They desired to improve themselves; to enlighten their minds; to spread intelligence; to impart a more Christian character to their lives; to increase the congregations connected with the Association; to improve the attendance on public worship, and at the Lord's Supper. These great objects they had in view. Nor did they forget the duties which they owed their fellow-creatures. It was most true that charity began at home. Their first consideration was with their families, and those connected with them; but they also turned their attention to other churches, but above all, to that gracious Being who enabled them to assemble together in that happy, and, he trusted, profitable manner. The meeting was then addressed, chiefly on subjects connected with the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, by the Rev. J. Whitehead, F. Howarth, C. Wallace, and Dr. Harrison.

TEA PARTY AT TAVISTOCK.

On Wednesday, 25th September, a social tea party was given to the Rev. H. Solly, on the occasion of his leaving Tavistock. According to announcement from the committee, it was held apart from all sectarianism, and intended as a public mark of sympathy, and of the respect in which he was held by all denominations of Christians. The excellent choir of the Unitarian Chapel attended, and performed during tea. Mr. J. Pearse (an Independent) was unanimously called to the chair, and opened the meeting with an effective speech, in which he bore an unequivocal testimony to the merits and general usefulness of Mr. Solly, and expressed a wish that the course of his successor might be as much marked by general usefulness as his had been. He then called on Mr. Westmacott to address the meeting, who was once a Wesleyan local preacher, but had lately, from conviction, joined the Unitarian body of Christians. He went into detail respecting the connexion that had existed between Mr. Solly and the various institutions of the town, showing his general usefulness, and the loss that would be experienced by his leaving; and then urged those around him to devote all the energies they possessed to the promotion of human improvement, so that his loss might not be so severely felt. The chairman next called on Mr. Commins, an old friend to the cause

of Unitarianism, who spoke at great length, and referred to the general character and labours of Mr. Solly. The choir then sung an Anthem ("Oh be joyful"—Dr. Arne), after which the chairman called on Mr. Yelland, who had also been a Wesleyan local preacher, and had lately joined the Unitarian body. He showed the eminent usefulness of Mr Solly in advocating the rights of man in a political point of view in a very able manner, after which the choir sung "Gloria in Excelsis," by Pergolesi. The chairman then introduced Mr. Solly, who was received with much applause. He expressed the emotions excited by such a reception, observing that, as the last mark of respect the public could pay him, to come forward as with the heart of one man thus to testify their gratitude and esteem for him, was almost too much for him. His speech was characterized by judgment and moderation, and warmly expressed his gratitude. He assured the meeting that this mark of their good opinion had made such an impression on his mind, that so long as memory held her seat, the people of Tavistock would ever be dear to him. Three other speakers afterwards addressed the meeting. The choir then performed an Anthem ("Handel's Hallelujah"), and after a vote of thanks to the chairman had been carried and responded to, the meeting broke up about ten o'clock. Altogether, it was one of the best demonstrations of public feeling, of respect, and esteem, ever witnessed in Tavistock.

UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

On Sunday, October 6, the anniversary sermons, on behalf of this Association, were preached, by the Rev. James Crawford Leddie, LL.D, in the houses of the First and Second Presbyterian Congregations, when collections, amounting to £56 : 16 : 4, were taken up in aid of the funds of the institution. The annual meeting of the Society was held, the following evening, in the Commercial Buildings, when the members and friends of the institution were entertained at tea. The attendance was very numerous, and highly respectable.

Robert Grimshaw, Esq. J.P. D.L. having been called to the chair, expressed his deep sense of the honour the Society had conferred on him, and said, he most heartily accepted of their invitation to preside on the occasion. After briefly referring to the triumph achieved by the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, he called on the secretary to read the report.—As this Report will be found in the present number of the *Bible Christian*, we need not do more than thus refer to it. When it had been read, James Thomson Tennent, Esq. rose to move its adoption by the meeting, and spoke to the following effect:—

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, When I received my young friend the Secretary's, note, requesting me to move a Resolution, I began to feel considerable anxiety about making a speech; but on finding that the resolution referred to a report

which I had never seen, I concluded my best way was to leave that report to speak for itself. And as this room contains so many eloquent persons, whom you are no doubt eager to hear speak, I am sure the meeting will agree with me, that I came to a safe conclusion : indeed it would be impossible for me to discuss the various topics contained in that report. Nevertheless, I cannot sit down without congratulating this large and influential assembly, upon the position which we now occupy, as compared with that of our last anniversary. We were *then* defending ourselves against the combined attacks of the intolerant, the bigoted, and the selfish. Our religion was denounced, and our morality impugned ; we were unscrupulously denominated heretics, and even unbelievers in Deity itself ; we were said to *dishonour* God !—*him* whom *our* simple worship elevates to *unshared supremacy*. We dreaded *then*, lest our pecuniary resources would be exhausted in defending ; in the Law Courts of the country, our own property, and that left to us by our ancestors ; and so hot was the persecution, that we were driven to the legislature for protection. And while at the bar of our country, we were assailed by the most unblushing falsehoods, and the most unfounded calumnies. It would be absurd to affirm, that our peculiar religious doctrines were either condemned or upheld by the legislature ; but our *truthfulness*, our *sincerity*, our faith in our own doctrines, and our general moral worth, were all severely tested. We were tried by fire, and came out as pure gold. The most important, the most powerful, and the most enlightened Court in the world, pronounced a verdict *in our favour* ! and stepped in between us and the spoliators : quieting the possession of our property, which no honest man dare to say is not justly ours. We are *now* triumphant ; and I trust our success will not induce us to relax in our exertions for the spread of the pure and simple doctrines of the New Testament, nor make us less charitable to the opinions of others. And while we send missionaries to preach the truth, I hope it will never be our part to invade the peace of other worshipping societies, or, still less, with low and ignorant Bible readers, force ourselves into the peasant's home, and disturb the happiness of his fireside. No ; let our missionaries be men of education, of intelligence, of good feeling ; and let their preaching be public, "from the house-tops, and the mountain sides,"—boldly announcing the truth as delivered by Jesus Christ—sowing the good seed which will, no doubt, one day spring up, and ripen into a fruitful harvest.

A Resolution, expressing thanks to Dr. Ledlie, for his services on the preceding day ; and conveying the congratulations of the meeting to himself and his brethren in Dublin, on their escape from the machinations of those who sought to deprive them of their rightful patrimonies, was then moved by A. Brenan, Esq. seconded by S. Bruce, Esq. and passed with acclamation. Dr. Ledlie, in acknowledging this Resolution, spoke at much length, and with great effect ; detailing the unhappy history of the Munster Synod for some years back, and the painful scenes through which he had himself passed. Of this speech, a full and authentic report will be

found appended to the Annual Report of the Society. Various Resolutions were afterwards submitted to the meeting; and some remarks were offered by the Rev. C. J. M'Alester, on the value of Unitarianism, and our duty to exert ourselves for its extension; by the Rev. J. Scott Porter, on the efforts lately made in Strabane and Ballymena to establish Unitarian Congregations, on the prospect which existed of similar efforts being made in other localities, and on the readiness of the Society to encourage and assist them.

Mr. Grimshaw was then moved from the chair, and Mr. Tennent being called thereto, a vote of thanks, on the motion of Mr. J. Scott Porter, was cordially passed to Mr. Grimshaw, for his kindness in presiding.

We were highly gratified with the meeting in many respects; but we felt much regret, in common with others, that no arrangements had been made for the singing of hymns. In other places, on similar occasions, it is usual to introduce sacred music, which gives variety, and adds greatly to the effect of such meetings.

OPENING OF THE BANBRIDGE REMONSTRANT MEETING-HOUSE.

On Sunday, the 6th Oct. this new and beautiful erection was opened for public worship. From some peculiar circumstances, not very creditable to the parties who had the power of granting a renewal of the lease of the ground on which the ancient meeting-house stands, and which is embosomed amidst the last abodes of the departed members of the congregation, the present house of worship has been erected on a new site, on the immediate banks of the beautiful Bann. It is a remarkably handsome structure, and will remain a lasting and honourable memorial of the great liberality and public spirit of the inhabitants of Banbridge and its neighbourhood. The portico, which rises the whole height of the building, stands upon a platform, approached by five granite steps, and is in the Grecian Ionic style, having four fluted freestone columns, surmounted by a pediment, the entire front presenting a really handsome façade. The ceiling is divided into compartments, having a massive centre piece, and the panels moulded. The space over the vestibule, and ranging with the interior walls of the staircases, has been appropriated to a Committee-room. The appearance of the interior is elegant. The attendance at the sermon was very numerous, and highly respectable. The audience was composed of a great many members of other churches, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, and Trinitarian Presbyterians. Numerous parties came from Belfast, Lisburn, Hillsborough, Lurgan, Newry, Rathfriland, the Ards, and the vicinities of all those towns. We never were present, on any occasion, where we witnessed more affection and kindness exhibited by all parties, without distinction of creed. Dr. Montgomery chose as his text, Romans, xiv. 12, 13: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself

to God. Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way!" After a short and eloquent introduction, the Reverend preacher entered into a lengthened and efficient defence of his Remonstrant brethren, against what he conceived to be the misrepresentations which had been circulated against their peculiar doctrinal views. He concluded a lengthened, and most eloquent discourse (which occupied upwards of an hour and a half in delivery), by solemnly dedicating the house of worship to the service of the one true and living God, and to pure and undefiled religion. A collection was then taken up, to assist in defraying the debts unpaid, in building the house. It amounted to upwards of £300. The following gentlemen acted as collectors:—W. Sharrman Crawford, Esq. M.P.; J. R. Allen, Esq. High Sheriff of the County Down; William Coates, Esq. Thomas Crawford, Esq. David Lindsay, Esq. Hugh Dalzell, Esq. George Scott, Esq. William Nicholson, Esq. William M'Canoe, Esq. James Grimshaw, Esq. Hill Irvine, Esq. William M'Clelland, Esq.

PUBLIC DINNER TO THE REV. DR. MONTGOMERY.

On Tuesday, the 9th inst. the Rev. Dr. Montgomery was entertained at a public dinner in Dromore, by the leading friends of religious liberty in that town and neighbourhood, for the purpose of celebrating the great triumph of freedom and justice achieved by the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and recording their gratitude to Dr. Montgomery for the eminent services which he had rendered, and the great ability which he had displayed, in the promotion of that measure. The party was highly respectable, comprising the leading gentlemen in the linen trade in that district, and many who had come from a considerable distance to be present on the occasion. The spacious apartment which had been appointed for the banquet fell far short of accommodating those who were desirous to participate in this tribute of popular feeling, and a portion of the company—a party very large in itself—were obliged to dine in another room. D. Lindsay, Esq. J. P. Ashfield, occupied the chair. The usual loyal toasts having been given, the chairman introduced, with some appropriate remarks, the health of their distinguished guest.

Doctor Montgomery rose, and, after expressing his sense of the kindness which prompted this entertainment; and alluding to the anxious days and sleepless nights which their recent difficulties had cost him, proceeded to speak as follows:—Presbyterianism has been, not inaptly, called "a double-distilled dissent"—first, from the Church of Rome, and again from the Church of England. We Presbyterians, therefore, have always boasted of our church as being somewhat purer than others in its discipline and doctrines. In this view, we may be in error; and I state it without designing the slightest disrespect to my brethren of other denominations; but the very fact of our secession from

other churches implies the supposed superiority of our own, and those who have twice exercised the right of *dissenting*, on the ground of free inquiry, *ought* to be the asserters of liberty of conscience. We accordingly find that our illustrious Scottish ancestors, who equally resisted the domination of the churches of Rome and England, were the original *Whigs* of Great Britain, and that our more immediate progenitors of this country were the glorious *Volunteers* of 1782. Presbyterianism, therefore, from its origin, its principles, and its progress, was but another name for "Civil and religious liberty," until it permitted itself, a few years ago, to be disgraced by two or three ambitious men, who first enthralled it with the fetters of human creeds, and then bound it as a bond-slave to the chariot of political ascendancy. These facts are familiarly known to every reader of history. The first Presbyterians who settled in Ulster, in the year 1611, brought with them no creed but the Bible; nor did they, as a church, submit even nominally to any other standard of Faith, until the year 1705. I do not deny that they may have been Trinitarians and Calvinists, or that some of them may have assented to human creeds previously to their settlement in Ireland, but I do maintain, that in this country they were *Christian freemen*, and that the Non-subscribing Presbyterians, of the present day, are their only genuine religious descendants and representatives. We may not hold all the peculiar doctrines which they believed, but we do more and better—we cherish, and we abide by the glorious sentiments of religious and political liberty, which they *practically* maintained—yes, I say, which they *practically* maintained, *at all times*; for although, in the year 1705, they nominally submitted to subscribe the Westminster Confession, the yoke was impatiently borne from the first—several ministers never subscribed, and after a seven years' controversy, the Presbytery of Antrim seceded, rather than become partakers in other men's sins, by imposing a burthen upon their brethren which they would not themselves bear. After the Antrim secession, in the year 1726, were the members of the General Synod all of *one mind* whilst they subscribed the *same creed*? Not at all. It was found impossible to enforce absolute, unconditional subscription, and they adopted the principle of what was called "*The Pacific Act*,"—i.e. a law authorizing subscription, *with an explanation!* Why, on such a plan, I could honestly subscribe the Koran of Mahomet. Only allow men to give their own explanations, and to make their own exceptions, and no creed would impose the slightest difficulty. Thus it was that the ministers of the Synod smiled knowingly in each other's faces, and threw dust into the people's eyes, until even the *name* of subscription became a mockery, as its *reality* had always been. Some honest Calvinist, lamenting this state of affairs, procured a resolution of Synod to be passed, in 1784, declaring, that "subscription was to be continued in *full force*;" but the very next year this resolution was modified, and subscription declared "to be continued in its *usual force*," i.e. in no force at all; for it had been, by *pacific acts and evasions*, practically null from the beginning. Thenceforward, all hollow pre-

texts of subscription were done away in *ten* Presbyteries out of *fourteen*, and even the four which "had a name to live," authorised the old scheme of explanation, and actually licensed and ordained the most *ultra Unitarians* in the ministry!—This absurd and dishonest state of affairs was terminated in 1824, by the enactment of *The code of discipline*, which embodied, in clear and express terms, the salutary usages of the church, and did not impose even a nominal subscription to the Westminster Confession. Some, and I acknowledge myself to have been of the number, looked forward to halcyon days of liberty, and candour, and peace, under our new regulations; and I rejoiced with the Apostle Paul, not only that "I was born free," but further still, educated free—ordained free—and one of the most active framers of a free constitution for coming generations. This peaceful condition of the church was not, however, suited to the taste of certain restless and domineering spirits, as there was in it no field for obtaining distinction, except in discharging the quiet, unobtrusive duties of the pastoral office. Hence, in the year 1827, advantage was taken of the political excitement created by the discussion of Catholic Emancipation, to engraft upon it a religious excitement in favour of Calvinism; and, at the meeting of that year, without the required notice, and in open defiance of the Code of Discipline, as well as of decency and moderation, all the ministers of the synod were called upon to declare their assent to a mysterious article of alleged orthodoxy, set forth in the absurd and self-contradictory language of "The Shorter Catechism." To this scandalous dictation I regret to say that the majority of the clergy weakly or unworthily submitted, under the influence of popular clamour. A few, however, refused to bow their necks to the yoke, being determined "to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," as well as to assert the freedom of thought and action guaranteed by the laws and usages of their church. A warm controversy, therefore, commenced; and, finding these *heretics* irreclaimable, either by abuse or argument, the synod of 1828, which assembled in a dark and bigoted region, proceeded to enact more stringent laws, to enforce more grinding penalties—to trample, with sarcastic sneers, upon the code of discipline, and to demand our acquiescence in measures from which our consciences revolted. Against these proceedings we remonstrated, in a document drawn up by my most estimable friend, Mr. Davis—a document unequalled in force of argument and powerful illustration of Gospel principles—a document worthy to be written in letters of gold, and held in perpetual remembrance. But what could argument or Scripture avail against a tyrant majority, marshalled under leaders, who, being determined to get rid of stiff-necked honesty, and exercise undisputed control, resolved "to make the house too hot for us!" At the same time, they dared not, too boldly, and at once, outrage public decency; and, consequently, they adopted the system of "fine words and fair speeches," requesting us to withdraw from them in peace, "as dear brethren!" As it is not long since I quoted their "honeyed accents" on this subject, I need not repeat them;

but, unhappily, we eventually found them, like "the little book" mentioned in the Revelations, "sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the stomach." We did not, however, know our opponents *then* as we do *now*; and, after another ineffectual "*Appeal*," in the year 1829, we entered into "Terms of an Amicable Separation," and retired from a creed-bound church "in full possession," as Sir R. Peel forcibly expressed it, "of all our rights, privileges, properties and immunities."—But how long did we enjoy the promised peace? Not one week! Our principles were reviled and misrepresented from the pulpit and the press—our congregations were invaded by missionaries and preachers—landlords, agents, and bailiffs were mustered in hostile array against us—political rancour was called in to embitter the strife, and, in short, no means which ingenuity could devise, or the most persevering malignity could execute, were wanting to effect our ruin, for the *crime* of being honest men! I could make "a thrill of horror" to pass through your breasts by detailing the infamous persecutions to which many of our ministers were subjected for several years; but, by the blessing of God, "they were found faithful,"—all the intelligence and worth of their people adhered to their ministry, and only in six cases could all the acts of misrepresentation, and all the power of worldly influences, detach even a small minority from their Churches. The chaff being thus sifted from the wheat—persecution having raved itself to rest—we had a season of repose; and believing that it would continue, I readily *forgave*, though I could not *forget*, and cheerfully extended the right hand of friendship to those that had "despitefully used us," partly from my native abhorrence of continued enmity, and partly from my desire to avoid presenting to the people the indecent spectacle of ministers of the *Gospel* meeting without salutation. For this facility of temper, I am aware that I was blamed by many; yet, even now, I do not regret it, as I believe I acted right at the time, and, as it rendered the subsequent persecutions to which we have been subjected more odious and inexcusable.—But how was the tempest again awakened? Strangely enough. The sensual and ungrateful Charles II. after his restoration, by the aid of the Presbyterians, passed the *Act of Uniformity*, in 1662, requiring *all* ministers to conform to the doctrine and worship of the Established Church. This infamous enactment, designed to crush his benefactors, caused 2,000 godly ministers to resign their livings in a single day, and this iniquitous law continued in full force until the year 1690, when William (whose memory I do not hesitate to call "glorious," in so far as he was the friend of religious toleration) authorised the preaching of Dissenters who should conform to "the Doctrinal Articles of the Established Church." In 1719, a similar privilege was extended to Ireland by George the First, expressly excluding, however, "those who impugned the doctrine of the Trinity." Now, in the year 1704, a *Lady Hewley*, of York, being a Presbyterian, left considerable property for "the support of poor and godly ministers of Christ's Holy Gospel," and appointed her own relatives and others to be trustees, with authority to name their colleagues and successors. In a very short time, all the trustees avowed

Unitarian opinions, but they were too honest to act upon exclusive principles, or to say, that none were "ministers of Christ's Gospel" who did not adopt their views of theology. Consequently, whilst they so nursed and improved the fund, that it eventually produced £3,000 a-year, they gave £2,400, or *five-sixths* of the whole annual income, to Trinitarians. But did this honourable, this glorious impartiality, secure the approbation of the Orthodox? No; they yearned to grasp the *whole fund*, and finding an attorney who discovered that Unitarianism was proscribed by law in 1704, they applied to the Court of Chancery, some years ago, and all the Unitarian trustees were dismissed. The Court, however, has not yet determined who are to supply their places; so that £30,000 of the fund has gone to attorneys and lawyers, and, for many years no poor and godly minister has received one farthing. But how did this affair involve us? Why, thus: until the act of George the 1st, passed in 1719, was repealed in the year 1817 (i.e. for the space of ninety-eight years) the preaching of Unitarianism was prohibited by law; and although Unitarianism *was* preached, and although Unitarians built and endowed places of worship, yet, whilst the penal statute was in force, all houses then erected were *presumed* by law to be for law-ful purposes—and, consequently, for Trinitarian worship? But you may ask, is it possible that any men, professing to be Christians, could take advantage of an obsolete penal law to plunder their brethren? Happily, during upwards of a century, no men were found base enough so to act; nor, indeed, until nearly twenty years after the act was repealed. But, Sir, we live in *evangelical times*, when men are not ashamed to commit any violation of decency and justice in the name of religion! Under the operation of the old law, and under the pretext of vindicating the honour and truth of the God of Justice, the people of Clough and Killinchy have been driven from their meeting-houses, at a loss and cost of £3000.—"The General Fund" in Dublin, of £900 a-year has been wrested from the Trustees appointed by its founders—the Congregations of Eustace-street and Strand-street, with their large funds, were on the very brink of ruin; yes, and even the portion of the widow and the orphan had been infamously assailed! For a long time I confess I did not, I could not believe that these miserable men would attack the Remonstrants, with whom they had entered into solemn and Christian compact, and, consequently, my own congregation have expended, during the last few years, at least £800 in valuable improvements. When repeatedly reminded of our danger, I laughed it to scorn, for I remembered that even the rudest chieftain of the American forests would not violate his truce, when he had smoked with an *enemy* the *calumet*, or, "pipe of peace;" and it was impossible for me to believe that the leaders and guides of a Christian Church would violate a solemn engagement voluntarily, and of their own motion, entered into with their former *brethren and friends*! Experience, however, has taught me a different lesson. Instead of finding a type in the wild savages of the West, a more appropriate one has appeared in the East, where Akbar Khan induced our countrymen and fellow-subjects to

surrender their arms, and leave Cabool under the pledge of his protection, and redeemed his pledge by falling upon a defenceless multitude, and leaving the bones of 13,000 victims to whiten the plains and passes of Afghanistan! Sir, the conduct of the Synod eventually removed the veil from our eyes, and we proceeded in January, 1843, to Dublin, and laid our case before the Irish Government. On that occasion we were followed by our opponents, who put in a counter statement. Well knowing their powers of face and invention—being myself little skilled in taking long shots, and still less, “in drawing the long bow”—and having always found it the best way to bring a slippery enemy to close quarters, I challenged Dr. Cooke to meet me before Lord Eliot, that in each other's presence we should state our respective pleas. Did he meet me? Of course he did not: he was particularly engaged! He thought with Falstaff, “that the better part of valour was discretion:” he would not submit his dross to the test of truth, and, consequently, he fled the field. With the concurrence of the Irish secretary, we afterwards proceeded to London, where we consulted with our English friends, who were involved in similar danger. We then applied to the leading members of the Government; and, although received courteously, it was evident we were not in good odour. We stated our case, however, like honest men—we admitted our insignificance and unpopularity, as a *sect*; as well as our being, in general, their political opponents. We then cast ourselves *solely* upon their sense of justice; and, to their immortal honour be it told, our free confession of political hostility evidently conciliated their good opinion. Nothing, however, seemed likely to be effected. Our opponents were there also, with their wonderful pleas and allegations; and I again proposed to confront Drs. Cooke and Stewart, in the presence of Sir R. Peel, or Sir J. Graham. I also proposed arbitration, by three honest men in Ireland, by four members of the House of Commons, sanctioned by Government, or an inquiry by a committee of the House of Lords, or a royal commission to sit in Ireland. All these equitable proposals—in short, everything which would have led to a complete understanding of the case—were either evaded, or directly declined. Happily, I obtained an opportunity on one occasion, of placing our documentary proofs in contrast with the statements of our opponents; and most heartily do I wish that I was at liberty to relate the circumstances of that interview. I know that it largely served us; and that our moderate and equitable propositions in July and August, 1843, not only conciliated the good opinion of powerful men, but brought out in most advantageous contrast, the bitterness and the injustice of our enemies. The disgust created by their declining Parliamentary arbitration, or the investigation of a royal commission; and their pertinacious adherence to “Chancery law,” couched in language equally audacious and impertinent, rendered us the most important service. There is, at least, one person in this house, who knows that the question was virtually settled in August, 1843, and that last year, the details of our Relief Bill were alone to be settled. I am the more particular in adverting to this point, because I

am aware that a few individuals, although I am persuaded out of no unfriendly feeling towards me, have condemned my pacific proposals, as implying that we were in possession of something to which we were not justly entitled. [Dr. Montgomery referred to the unworthy means that had been taken to defeat the bill, and the generous support it had received from men of all parties, and thus concluded.] And now, gentlemen, with one observation I shall release the attention which you have so kindly afforded me. Our worthy chairman, a short time ago, whispered to me, that I was likely to be spoiled with kindness and public approbation. Now, I am not at all afraid of this; for I am a living instance of how much kindness a man can bear.—These thirty-five years in which I have been more or less a public character, I have lived in the constant experience of good and generous offices from my fellow-men. And if, occasionally, the bigot or the ingrate has cast a few briars on my path, it has only tended to enhance the sweetness and beauty of the flowers which thousands of friendly hands have strewn around me. Don't mind the Chairman, therefore; at least, on this point: for, if thirty-five years of kindness have still left me worthy of the proud and gratifying testimonial of your regard which I now enjoy, I can scarcely be spoiled at all. I announce to you, and to all others, however, that I am willing to become the subject of an experiment. Lay on favour after favour, and you shall see how meekly, how patiently, I will bear them! Again, Mr. Chairman, and all my other kind friends, "I thank you from my heart of hearts."

A Soiree was held on the evening of the same day, in the Meeting-house of the First Presbyterian Congregation, which was most numerous and respectably attended. W. Maclelland, Esq. of Clanmurry, presided; and various sentiments were given and responded to by Revds. F. Blakely, W. B. Minnis, J. Davis, D. Maginnis, W. Glendy, &c.

FATHER MATHEW.

[We copy from the *London Inquirer* the following painful notice of this distinguished Irishman and genuine Christian, whose labours have been so eminently blessed, for the moral elevation of our country. The urgent appeal which it makes, will we doubt not, be heartily met by generous men of all parties, grateful for the blessings which this good man has been the honoured instrument of conferring on his native land; and we shall be happy to receive and forward any contributions that may be sent to the Bible Christian office.]

The world has long honoured Mr. Mathew as the Apostle of a holy cause—it must now hear of him as its Martyr. When we state that this true-hearted Reformer, who has devoted all that God has given him—his life, his energies, and his means, to the promotion of his benevolent work, is, at this moment, involved in pecuniary difficulties—the result of his disinterested efforts, so distressing as to cripple his exertions, and overwhelm him with

anxieties, we state enough to rouse all the sympathies of our readers, and to engage their serious attention for the simple outline of facts which we are about to lay before them. And here we may premise, that we are fully authorized to give publicity to the following painful details, and that a time has arrived, when all who honour the Man, and value his Work, must render prompt and generous assistance.

From the very commencement of his philanthropic labours, Mr. Mathew has been exposed to frequent and severe trials. His family was deeply engaged in the manufacture and sale of spirits. To several of its members, the reform was ruin. One brother-in-law, a distiller, became bankrupt. A brother, also a distiller, has just died, suddenly, and in the prime of life, leaving a family to be provided for. His death is said to have been hastened by the anxiety of mind, consequent upon the impaired state of his business. *And yet this man, and other members of the family, had, with a noble generosity, supplied Mr. Mathew with large sums of money, for the furtherance of his work.* Valuable friends, too, in the wine and spirit trade, have been known to suffer to the amount of half their business. These are no common trials. They have been met and endured in no common spirit. All will sympathize with the man thus placed between the pleadings of feeling and affection on the one side, and the stern dictates of conscience on the other. Mr. Mathew has not hesitated to sacrifice the pecuniary interests of his family, for the sake of the general good. His family have generously supported him, to their own injury. These things should not be forgotten in his hour of difficulty.

All the debts, which now press so heavily on the great Reformer, have been incurred in the service of the cause to which he has devoted himself. The expenses connected with the movement have been heavy, and they have fallen, in great part, upon Mr. Mathew. His work has chiefly been amongst the poorest. Generally, the rich have looked coldly upon him, and afforded little aid. Meetings had to be held, names to be registered, bills to be posted, papers and pamphlets to be circulated. It was necessary to furnish cards and medals to the members of the society. Of the latter, some were sold; but thousands, many of them silver, had to be given away. The poor could not buy them—the rich would not. Children, emigrants, and others, were always supplied *gratis*. Many friends of the cause procured medals for distribution, intending to pay Mr. Mathew for them. But the same causes which prevented his own distribution from being remunerative, affected theirs, and if payment had been pressed for, the cause would have suffered. In such cases, the loss fell upon Mr. Mathew. In this way he became deeply involved in debt to the manufacturers of medals, before he was aware of it. Some time since he was actually arrested in Dublin for debts thus contracted.

But the expenses connected with the administration of the pledges formed but a small part of the whole cost. It was neces-

sary to take measures for giving stability and permanence to the change which had been effected. For this purpose, reading-rooms were established in connexion with the various societies, and Temperance publications and newspapers distributed amongst them. So long as he possessed any resources, Mr. Mathew was always a principal contributor towards the formation of these institutions. On founding a new society, he commonly presented a sum of money to be employed for such purposes. * * *

Lastly, sufferers by the reform were generously relieved. The widow, the orphan, and the aged, whose means of subsistence had been interfered with, were never refused assistance. In this way—by such noble deeds of mercy, Mr. Mathew's resources have been exhausted. He is now destitute of means; considerable debts press heavily upon him. He is daily harassed by demands for money, with which he is totally unable to comply. And above all, he is prevented from labouring freely and with vigour for the cause which is so dear to him, and which so much requires his assistance.

We feel that it is quite needless to add much to the foregoing facts. They will touch all hearts. This great and good man has devoted his life and powers to a noble work—he has sacrificed his own property and that of his family for its sake. He has laboured most devotedly and most disinterestedly, and we cannot believe that any, whether teetotalers or not, will refuse him their sympathy and aid. We feel confident, that when his difficulties are known, they will be at once removed. We ought to take pride in being able to serve him. We are all his debtors.** Some time ago a Mathew testimonial was set on foot in Ireland, and a considerable sum was subscribed towards it. The public will now be naturally anxious to know what has become of it, and whether it cannot be increased, and employed for the removal of his present difficulties. The temperance cause cannot be better served than by securing to it the labour and influence of its apostle.—In conclusion, we may remark that *the case is an urgent one*. If relief be not promptly afforded, the most painful consequences may follow.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The name of the *Inquirer* was by mistake omitted in the copy furnished to us of the resolutions of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, expressive of their obligations to the liberal press of the United Kingdom. This would appear in reading the speech of the mover of that resolution, wherein he includes the *Inquirer* amongst "the powerful allies who generously fought on our side."

We are requested to correct an error in last Number, page 339, line 26, where the word *curve* has been printed for *bless*. The passage should be—"Bless God and die."

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the Rev. C. J. M'Alester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Belfast.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

(THIRD SERIES.)

No. XII.

DECEMBER, 1844.

Vol. VI.

THE BURDEN OF FULFILLED DESIRE.

ALL hearts have their desires, their trials, their temptations. The pious lay them before their God; they cast their cares on "one that is mighty." They remember with what graciousness the Saviour, while on earth, looked upon the faithful and confiding spirit. "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."—"Fear not, only believe."—Such were some of his tender replies. And on such as these, the confiding Christian, when burdened, leans for support. The pious endeavour to make their duty the boundary of their will. The impetuous and uncontrolled are inconsistent; at one time they trust all to God, at least, so they profess to do: the next time, their support is to be found in themselves, or in the world. They rise and they fall; they know not what wave supports them. These are enemies to themselves; but they grow wiser and return to God. There is another class who act deliberately wrong; they make their desires the rule of their actions. But do they find peace? Nay—they are to be compared to the forward child, who, disobediently plucking the forbidden fruit from the bough, finds it filled, not with the sweet pulp, and flowing juice, but with a swarm of noxious and stinging insects. The little urchin throws it hastily on the ground, and stamps in a passion of terror and disappointment. Some there are who, forming evil, or unwise desires, find in success their bitterest trial, their heaviest burden. Let us try if Scripture bears us out in asserting that fulfilled desire sometimes becomes a burden. Sometimes, did we say? Yea, always—where it is evil in itself, or selfishly and ungenerously pursued. See our first parents—it takes but little eloquence to prove, that their case is to the purpose. They hear the voice of God in the garden—why

do they fail to welcome it with their usual joy? They make some frivolous excuse, but what is the truth? They have tasted of that which was forbidden, and the fulfilled desire has become a burden!—How long did the miserable Cain believe that partiality to his brother was the unjust cause of his rejection? If he had no brother, he might, he argued with himself, have some chance of blessing and approbation. The awful deed is done—the impediment is removed—and the branded outcast, with a brother's blood upon his head, is not able to bear the burden of his fulfilled desire!

When the men of ancient days, without setting the will of God before their eyes, with a view of effectually preventing the dispersion of mankind, undertook to build a city and a tower whose top should reach to heaven;—the desire was fulfilled; the wonderful height might almost be said to have been reached; but the end is not attained—the fulfilment of the desire has become the cause of the evil they dreaded, and thought to prevent. When Rebecca, over-desirous to gain for her favourite the promised blessing, not waiting, as she should have done, the Lord's time and means, made use of indirect paths and ungenerous ways, what was the consequence? She gained indeed, the object and attainment of her desire; but at what an expense! Her son Jacob has learned treachery and unkindness; he has won the hatred of his brother; and he must fly from his home, and from the presence of the mother who delighted in him: she is left, to bear alone, the burden of her fulfilled desire! The brethren of Joseph hated their father's favourite; they fulfilled their desire—they sold him for a slave,—and as every one knows, who has delighted in that beautiful history, the very pains they took to humble him, became, by the providence of God, the cause of his exaltation, and their abasement; so that, *in very deed*, his parents and his brethren bowed themselves down before him.

The crafty Pharaoh made an iniquitous law concerning the children of Israel, which he conceived would redound to the benefit of the Egyptians, and to the injury of their bondmen; yet it was that very law,* which was the

* Moses could not have been "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," had not the daughter of the king adopted him, for we have read that none but the aristocracy of Egypt were allowed access to learning, and the iniquitous law was the cause of this adoption.

means of preparing for the oppressed race, one of their own blood, every way fitted by circumstances, knowledge, and sympathies, to become their deliverer and law-giver. Thus did Pharaoh's fulfilled desire become a burden indeed, not only to the ruler, but to all his people.

The children of Israel loathed the manna which God gave to satisfy their appetite in the desert. They desired flesh; God gave them of their hearts' desire. "And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague."

The children of Israel desired a king, like the nations around; instead of being satisfied, as it was their duty to have been, with the government appointed by God. Their fulfilled desire became a heavy burden, when the sin and idolatry of their kings caused the people to be led into captivity. How many of their godless rulers were forced to learn by experience, the burden of fulfilled desire. Lo! Ahab arises to take possession of the vineyard for which he had pined. What mars his triumph? Behold his success is become his misery! The prophet commissioned of Jehovah meets him, and reads him his death-warrant. How is the pleasant garden become a desert! The fertile vineyard a "waste howling wilderness!" What would he not now give that his unruly desire had been curbed! But it is too late; the burden of fulfilled desire must be carried.

Hezekiah prays fervently for lengthened life; his prayer is heard. Why do we shortly after find him mourning? He has learned this from his lengthened days—that the people of the Lord shall be carried away captive by the Heathen. The Gentile king to whom he boasts his treasures, shall learn to covet them.

The enemies of Daniel fervently desire his overthrow; they are successful in inducing the king to make a law that shall entrap the young stranger. But, oh! how heavy proves the burden of their fulfilled desire! The restrained lions are ready, they know whom to devour!

Haman desired earnestly the life of the man who kept back the shew of courtesy toward himself. His desire is fulfilled; he is invited to the queen's banquet—all is prepared. But oh! the burden of his fulfilled desire, 'tis.

too heavy to bear. We leave him to his merited opprobrium.

In the New Testament, we behold Herod the tetrarch who commanded the death of John; his desire is fulfilled. His reprover is silenced—but is the murderer happy? “John,” he says, “have I beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” Why is he not content? His foe is slain, and just in the manner he might have wished. The odium is thrown off himself; he may make a fair show of reluctance, for there are others willing, nay, eager to bear the disgrace; why then is he not content? Could he have won his desire more creditably? He not only gets rid of his enemy, but may gain credit for humanity besides. Conscience whispers murder, and the burden of his fulfilled desire is wearisome to bear!

Judas—awful name! Thirty pieces of silver, how bright they look! How they glitter in his eyes! How they jingle in his ears! Judas, thou mayest have them! Oh, they are much to be desired! They can be won! ‘Tis but to show whither his holy master retires for prayer. ‘Tis done. His Lord is betrayed and condemned, but Judas has his thirty pieces of silver! What is the matter? Are they wanting in weight? Is their lustre dim? Why does he cast them back to those from whom he received them? Oh! they are heavier to carry than the cross his injured master is bearing! The fulfilled desire is too terrible to support! He may not pause; he may not look back; he rushes headlong to destruction!

Behold one weeping bitterly. Is this also through fulfilled desire? Yes; he has with oaths renounced his friend, in the day of that friend’s calamity. Why is he not content? Have those to whom he spoke so vehemently refused to credit him? Ah, it is not that! His desire is fulfilled, but Jesus has looked upon him; his eyes are opened; he sees *apostate* written on his soul! Oh, wretched man! Let all the world call him Galilean now; let them call him disciple of the Nazarene—these cannot hurt him. But oh, that one word, *apostate*! how shall he bear that? Happily for Peter, even in his agony, he looked to the right place for pardon and compassion; and the penitent apostle learned in humility to bear his burden.

Such are some of the proofs from Scripture, that the fulfilment of our desires may often prove our heaviest

burden, our bitterest cross. Were we to search the open page of history, or the more private one of the biographer, would it not more and more confirm the truth of what we have attempted to establish; and prove that he only is wise who has learned to say, "Lord, not my will, but thine be done." For if our desire be to have a patient spirit and an obedient heart, we have a surety, that our fulfilled desire can never become a burden.

Dublin.

M. B.

ALLEGED DEFECTS OF UNITARIAN PREACHING.

(*Concluded from page 375:*)

ANOTHER alleged defect of Unitarian preaching which I shall briefly notice, is, that it is too scholastic, refined, and elevated, moving in a sphere far above the sympathies and comprehension of the large majority of those to whom it is addressed. This is, unquestionably, a characteristic fault of much of our preaching, and the chief cause, perhaps, why it is so deficient in interest and attractiveness, at least for the multitude. If you will look around upon any of our congregations, while in the act of listening to, or rather I should say *sitting out*, one of our carefully elaborated and well-written discourses, and then observe the same assembly when addressed by some popular lecturer, who pours out his fervid thoughts in rude and homely phrase, without much regard to method or connexion, but with a full-souled sincerity and earnestness,—in the dulness, apathy, and yawning listlessness which you will notice in the one case, and the animated, eager, excited attention which is given in the other, you will see a better illustration than I can possibly furnish, of the nature and causes of the defect which we are now considering. I allow, that we must and ought, in our preparations for the pulpit, to aim, first of all, to satisfy ourselves; to be true, that is, to our own judgment and tastes; to do our utmost, on every occasion, to come up to our own ideal of excellence. But may it not be, that we are somewhat too fastidious in our tastes, that we have set up to ourselves, not a too lofty, but an unsuitable standard of excellence? Is it not the case, that we make too much account of mere correctness; that we attach an

undue importance to the literary character of our performances; that we are more particular and nice, than need be, in regard to the elegancies and amenities of thought and expression? When we sit down, in our studies, to compose a sermon, are we not too apt to bring before ourselves, not the rude and ignorant, who form so large a proportion of every congregation, but the few professional men, the few critical and discriminating minds who may belong to our auditory, and to write to the latter, rather than to the former? And is not this one of the reasons why our ministrations are thought to be so wanting in popular interest and effect?

Did we consider how few there are in any of our societies who are able to appreciate the literary merits of a discourse,—how utterly insensible the great majority are to all the refinements and graces of style and diction; we should be less solicitous about these things ourselves, and more studious to adapt ourselves to the condition and wants of the common mind. May not preaching, without losing any of its dignity, assume more directness, become more free, easy, and familiar in its tone, be brought into closer and more living contact with the associations and feelings of the great mass of our hearers? Is it not possible to unite elevation, nay, even profoundness of thought with such familiarity of illustration and simplicity of style and language, that it shall be on a level with the humblest minds, while it shall minister instruction, comfort, and edification to the most refined and cultivated? Such was certainly the character of our Saviour's preaching. While he uttered the grandest, the sublimest thoughts which ever entered human conception, thoughts whose depth and significancy have never yet been fully penetrated, he always clothed them in the very plainest attire; he always addressed himself to the common mind; his images and illustrations were always familiar without being mean, were drawn from the commonest objects, from the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. We never find him using a hard word or making a learned allusion. We never find him running into vague generalities or metaphysical refinements. On the contrary, he was always simple, direct, popular; and "the common people heard him gladly." It is melancholy to think how many able and beautiful discourses are almost lost;

wasted, in consequence of the fault which we are now considering. By aiming too high they overshoot the mark altogether. They rise often and soar with a rocket-like brilliancy, producing no other effect but to awaken a momentary admiration.

And here I cannot help observing in regard to preaching, not to ours in particular, but to preaching in general, that it would be much better than it is, and vastly more effective, if there were a more entire absence from the minds of those who officiate, of all thought of self, of all desire of self-display; if there were a more entire singleness of purpose and aim, having reference solely to the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners; if there were a more entire self-absorption, if I may so express myself, in one deep, awful feeling of responsibility. If I should venture to name what seems to me one of the most striking defects in the modern pulpit, I should say, that it is vain, ambitious, egotistical, and self-seeking in the extreme, that it is, in many cases, little more than a theatre for self-exhibition. There is, I have often thought, among many of our preachers of the present day, a sad want of what Fenelon calls Christian simplicity, self-forgetfulness, self-abandonment, an overlooking and losing of themselves in the greatness and importance of their subject. They doubtless wish to do good, to promote virtue and dissuade from vice; but they wish also to sustain and heighten their reputation, to draw attention to themselves. In the composition and delivery of their sermons there is too often an evident desire to shine, to excite admiration. They are not willing to preach Christ only, but they must preach themselves, in part, likewise. They covet usefulness, but they covet popularity too, and usefulness, sometimes, it is to be feared, as a means of popularity. And what they seek they obtain. They have their reward, but is it such as the Christian teacher should be most anxious to secure?

Every profession has its dangers and temptations, and this unquestionably is the exposed side of ours. We would win souls to Christ, but we would also win favour and applause to ourselves. And it is the having of this two-fold object before us, it is this complexity of motive and aim, which does more than any thing else, I think, to weaken the effect of our ministrations, and to prevent

us from receiving that full blessing upon them which we might otherwise hope to receive. This, I repeat, is our weak side. Here we need to be most upon our guard. We should watch and pray against this our infirmity, our characteristic and besetting sin. Let us strive to keep our "eye single," looking to but one end, the fulfilment of our ministry, by bringing sinners to repentance. And as it will sometimes happen, while composing a sermon, that certain turns of thought or expression will present themselves to our minds, which seem to us particularly brilliant and happy, calculated to draw attention to ourselves—when this is the case, let us sacrifice them without mercy. We need more of the spirit of old Chrysostom, who, on receiving a burst of applause from his hearers, exclaimed, "What mean these acclamations, these empty plaudits, which I hear? I wish to be rewarded not by your praises, but by your conversion. This is the reward I wish to derive from my discourses, and this is all my ambition. I prefer your conversion to a kingdom." It is the mark of a truly good preacher, says one, that while he is actually preaching, the hearer does not think of him at all, that is, does not consider whether he speaks well, has talents, learning, refinement, gracefulness, but is wholly engrossed by the subject of the discourse and the impression it makes on his mind and heart, and goes his way to meditate and pray, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Let a worthier ambition be ours, than to be to our hearers like the song of one who "hath a very pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument," whose words they receive and applaud, and that is the end of it. But that is not the end of it, either to them or to us. A day of reckoning is coming, when inquisition will be made, not only how they have heard, but how we have preached. Then a single soul, saved by our faithfulness from death, will be deemed a richer recompense than the most brilliant reputation which minister or mortal ever gained.

There is still another defect in much of our preaching, which, though not peculiar to ourselves, may merit a moment's consideration. It not only dwells too much in the region of abstraction, of vague generalities, but it does not propose to itself a sufficiently distinct and definite object. We are, too apt, I suspect, to look upon our con-

gregations as a set of orderly, well-behaved, moral people; who need improvement, who need a larger measure of the Christian virtues and graces, who need to be somewhat more devout and spiritually-minded, and that is all. Whereas we have too much reason to believe, with regard to most of them, that they have not yet breathed even the first breath of the spiritual life; that they are wholly destitute of all true faith and vital godliness; that they need to be made over anew. They need repentance, conversion, regeneration, as much as did those to whom the Gospel was first addressed. They lack not one thing only, but everything that is peculiar and distinctive in the Christian life. They are spiritually dead; dead to all the higher objects, aims, interests, and hopes of their being; and they must be made alive. They must be awakened, aroused, made to feel their destitution and danger, made to feel that it is not the grosser vices alone which destroy the soul and disqualify it for heaven, but that worldliness, indifference, selfishness, thoughtlessness, frivolity, vanity, pride, ambition, avarice, will have the same fatal effect. Let them be taught that conversion is not a doctrine for felons only, but that it is equally necessary to the sober and decent worldling, to sinners of steady habits and respectable characters, to those who are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" that all such must pass through a change as mighty, a moral crisis as marked and striking, as our Saviour had in his thoughts when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Let there be this plain, close dealing with our hearers. Let the great sanctions, the awful alternatives of the Gospel be urged home upon their minds and hearts, with those searching, probing appeals which penetrate and alarm the conscience; and they will feel no disposition to criticise, or compliment the preacher, but will go their ways "pricked in the heart, saying, men and brethren, what shall we do."

A voice is yet to issue from the pulpit, a winning, awakening, warning voice, of power to break the spell which worldliness, indifference, and unbelief, have fastened upon the minds of men; to rouse them to a sense of their spiritual dangers and needs; to raise them from the grave of sense and sensuality to a vivid apprehension of things unseen and eternal, to a true, living, spiritual faith, to

that love of God and imitation of his perfections, which is the resurrection and life. Let this voice be lifted up in all our pulpits, and the kingdom of God will come with power.

That this end may be realized, our preaching must become more direct, circumstantial, discriminating; it must be brought home more directly to the business and bosoms of men; more into contact with every point in the whole circle of their welfare, of their daily wants, duties, trials, pursuits, and pleasures. It must be more adapted to that want of the age, which demands apt and pithy thought, vivid illustration, cogent argument and appeal, rather than well-turned periods. Our sermons must not be such as might have been written a quarter of a century ago. They must breathe the spirit, bear the form and pressure of the present day. They must be drawn less from books in our studies, less from the treasured stores of our minds, and more from our own personal experience and observation, more from what we have actually felt ourselves, and from what we have seen of the condition and wants of the living world around us. Let such be the character of our preaching, and it will produce greater and better results than we have yet witnessed from it.

Above all, what we most need to give full efficacy to our ministrations, is more faith ourselves; a more earnest and living faith, a deeper conviction of the reality of what we teach and inculcate. We must be able to say, when we speak of religion, of the efficacy of prayer, of the duties, dangers, trials, joys, and hopes, of the Christian life, "We speak that which we do know, and testify that which we have seen." Through him who hath this *faith of experience*, a faith resting upon a firm historical basis, but transformed by the affections into a living sentiment, a kind of personal consciousness, the word preached will be quick and powerful to awaken the careless, to convince the sceptical, to convert sinners, and to establish believers in everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. God grant that we may possess and exercise more of this faith! May the great Shepherd of the sheep give us all grace to be faithful, and enable us so to dispense the truths of his word, as to save ourselves and those who hear us!

“WATCH AND PRAY.”

It was night; the last supper was over. The Saviour, with his disciples, had come out to the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. At that solemn hour, while Jesus prayed in the agony of his heart, his followers, who seemed unwilling to believe their Master's announcement to them of the approaching trial, overcome with conflicting emotions of doubt, and hope, and fear, all slept. And their dreams were probably of worldly glory, and they saw in fancy the twelve thrones on which they were to sit in the kingdom of the Messiah. But they were soon awakened by the voice of their Master, addressing to Peter in particular that touching reproof, “Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.”

How soon were these words to be verified by the conduct of the disciples, and especially by that of Peter. He was ever foremost among them in his professions of fidelity. Full of enthusiasm and self-confidence, he had just been protesting his determination to die with his Master sooner than forsake or betray him. His spirit was indeed “willing,” willing doubtless to taste the agonies of crucifixion, so it were in the cause and company of his beloved Lord. In vain his Master admonished him with affectionate earnestness to watch and pray, and in vain he spoke of coming temptation. The ardent disciple heeded it not. What need had he to watch and pray? The doubting Thomas might have need to be vigilant and prayerful; he might need to have his heart strengthened and his faith confirmed; but Peter felt a fancied attachment to his Master which no form of danger could shake. Little did the passionate disciple comprehend the true trial which awaited him, and still less did he know how poorly he was prepared for any trial. Little did he suspect the seeds of sin that were sown among his good purposes. And when the hour came which was to put his fancied resolution to the test, at the first glimpse of real danger—so soon as a call was made upon his moral courage and firmness—he who had but a few moments before avowed his determination to know nothing but his Master, now said with an oath, “I know not the man.” Truly, here was a solemn comment upon those solemn words of the

apostle, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Peter not only thought, he knew—he was sure, that he stood; and yet the whisper of a maid-servant shook the tower of his strength, and he fell—yet not irrecoverably. The mild eye of his injured Lord rested upon him—"the Lord turned and looked upon Peter;" that look told more than words could utter, it searched the depths of Peter's conscience, it touched the springs of repentance—"he went out and wept bitterly." And doubtless the experience of that hour determined him henceforward to watchfulness and prayer.

We ought each, whatever be our circumstances in life, to derive a valuable lesson from the history of Peter. There is a disposition in man to slight the so called small duties of the present hour, to be dissatisfied with the sphere in which Providence has placed him, and to be ever looking forward to some very peculiar combination of events for the exercise of his fancied virtue. We are apt to overlook the daily and hourly returning events of common life, as occasions for the cultivation of goodness. We are too apt to be fancying how we should do, if we were tempted; as if every moment as it passed, did not bring with it a temptation and a trial—as if indeed we did not bear temptations ever and every where within our own bosoms. But we forget all this; we fancy ourselves free from temptation, and imagine that we have only at most to be acquiring strength for the day of trial whenever it shall arrive. Yet every day is a day of trial. Every day presents occasions for the exercise of all the moral strength we can command; every day, and every hour calls for all the vigilance of which we are capable.

Supposing that we, like Peter, neglect the call of immediate duty, and waste our energy in anticipations of future effort, of conflicts and victories by and bye; supposing that we slight the plain though apparently humble duties of the present moment, in the delusive idea that the time is not yet come for the trial of our moral power—what must be the consequence? If ever an extraordinary occasion for the exercise of our virtue should arrive, in what condition would it find us? Would it find us any the better prepared for meeting and overcoming great temptations, because we had been yielding to small ones all our days? Would the great occasion for which

we had been so long looking, bring with it a supply of strength to make up for what we had been so long wasting in idle dreams? Let none of us encourage ourselves with the shadow of such an idea. The time which is not spent in moral effort, the time in which we are spiritually idle is not only lost to the soul, but it leaves more to be done for future hours: and if even that day of labour to which we are looking should arrive, we should find that just in proportion as our work had been increasing on our hands, our strength had been diminishing, and that we had made but a wretched preparation for the struggle with great temptations, by suffering our moral strength to be hourly wasting away through sluggishness, indifference, and sin. Peter made this sad mistake. He looked and longed for some great scene in which to display his courage and his loyalty. As the future grew bright before him, he overlooked the *little* duties and dangers, as they seemed, of the passing hour. He could not "watch and pray" now; his mind was too full of coming trial and triumph, to allow him to think soberly of the importance of using the present moments for preparing and proving his soul. He could not then perceive that in his disregard of his Master's solemn and affectionate warning, he was already yielding to a temptation, he was already yielding to his besetting sin of self-confidence. He did not consider that he was thus all the while unfitting himself for future effort. He felt strong enough till the event made him sensible of his weakness, and filled him with shame at the thought that he had been slothfully dreaming of victory when he ought to have been girding for the conflict.

The example of Peter may serve to admonish us of the importance of constant vigilance, and remind us that we need not look far or into the future for temptations; since they are ever at our feet, and hidden in the deep places of our hearts. Let his example remind us how important it is that our principles be tried and strengthened by the ordinary events and duties of each returning day. We ought ever and again to reflect with a watchful eye upon the course of our actions, our thoughts, and our desires; for as the lightest feather will determine the direction of the wind; and as a straw will show the turn of the current; so to him who will calmly look back upon his conduct,

actions apparently at the time the most unimportant, will serve to reveal the tendency of his character. He on the other hand—such is the power of habit—who sleeps on his watch and suffers his soul to be drifted down the tide of worldliness, will at last, when by some startling event or otherwise, he is led to look in upon himself, find there a degree of depravity, the bare idea of which would once have filled him with horror.

We know not what temptations the future may have in store for us; we should pray therefore that God will not lead us into temptations greater than we can bear. What may be awaiting us, however, is all uncertain; but we do know what temptations already surround us, we do know, or we may know our besetting sins. We do not know what occasions may hereafter present themselves for the trial of our patience, our humility, our resignation; but we do know, or have the means of knowing, whether we are peculiarly liable to be passionate, or proud, or petulant. Here then is the sphere for watchfulness. If evil dispositions have possession of our hearts, they will create their own temptations. The passionate man will never lack opportunities of losing his temper, the proud man of showing his pride; the heart unreconciled to God will never want occasions for murmuring. Let each one then watch against "the sins which do most easily beset" him. We are apt to fancy it some mighty merit in us, that we are free from faults to which by our constitution or circumstances we are not peculiarly tempted; and the easier the struggle, the more we are prone to pride ourselves on the victory. God looketh at the heart, and if there be any evil disposition cherished there, which has become so familiar to us that we are almost unconscious of its presence, his pure eye will regard that very unconsciousness as an aggravation of our guilt. Our freedom from other sins will by no means clear us from the guilt of that one sin which secretly besets and conquers us—"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

We need to search ourselves watchfully, not without prayer that God would cleanse us from secret faults. Our path, by reason of the temptations which on either side encompass us, is a straight and narrow one. We

want light and we want strength. Therefore we are commanded to "watch and pray." Well has prayer been called

"A stream which from the fountain of the heart,
Issuing however feebly, nowhere flows
But with access of unexpected strength."

Let it be remembered however, that prayer can be of little profit to us, we shall have reason even to doubt its sincerity, unless it lead us to renewed watchfulness. "Either praying will make us leave sinning, or sinning will make us leave praying." But it is vain to attempt to open all the secret windings of self-deception. Suffice it to say, that our very seasons of prayer may be seasons of severe temptation, and therefore we should both "watch and pray." We should watch, in order that we may pray aright, taking heed lest when we think that we stand securely, we slip and fall.

C. T. B.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

(Extracted from Macknight's Harmony.)

ALMOST all the Greek fathers after the fourth century, thought our Lord was born on the 6th of January; but the Latins fixed his birth to the 25th of December. However, the principles upon which both proceeded, clearly prove their opinion to be without foundation. They imagined that Zacharias, John Baptist's father, enjoyed the dignity of high priest, and that he was burning incense on the day of expiation, when the angel appeared to him in the temple. And as the national expiation was always made on the 10th of Tizri, answering to the 25th of September, they fixed Elizabeth's pregnancy to that day, and supposed that Gabriel appeared to Mary precisely six months after, so that reckoning nine months forward, they brought the birth of Christ exactly to the 25th of December. The Greek fathers, though they proceeded upon the very same principles, were not so exact in their calculations, making the birth to happen ten days later. But the uncertainty, or rather the fallacy of these principles has induced Scaliger, Calvisius, and most learned men since their time, to maintain, in opposition to the ancient doctors of both churches, that our Lord was born

in September. The writers mentioned, support their opinion by the following calculation. When Judas Maccabeus restored the temple worship, on the 20th of the month Casleu, answering to the beginning or middle of our month December, the course of Joarib, a first course of priests, according to 1 Chron. xxiv. 7, began the service, the rest succeeding in their turns. By making computations, according to these suppositions, it is found, that the course of Abia, to which Zacharias belonged, served in the months of July or August, at which time, the conception of the Baptist happened. And as Mary had her vision in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, that is to say, about the beginning of January, she conceived so as to bring forth our Lord in the September following. With this agrees the circumstance of the shepherds lying out in the fields the night of the nativity, which happened in the month of September, but not in January. So likewise the taxation at Christ's birth, which might be executed more conveniently in autumn than in the depth of winter, especially as the people were obliged to repair to the cities of their ancestors, which were often at a great distance from the places of their abode.

A LEAF FOR CHILDREN.

A GOOD NAME.

POOR Joe, as he was usually called, was an orphan boy—none else had his grandmother to depend on; and he, though willing to work, could not always find employment. Honest in principle, he grieved to think he was in debt; rent was in arrear for their small habitation, and food and clothing were scanty.

One day, as the old woman sat alone, she was disturbed by a visit from their landlord, who threatened to turn them out. Joe, on coming home, encountered this formidable man, and entreating him to "have patience," but in vain, pursued his way with sad thoughts; he found his grandmother ready to quit the premises, and, to his surprise, cheerful! "I go to another habitation," she said,—"come and leave me at the workhouse, I will now feel the benefit of not having indulged in anything I cannot procure there; we may try to do good to others wherever we are, at present I am only a hindrance to you."

Joe knew she was good and pious, and complied with her wish; but they parted in great sorrow—their best comfort, a desire to do their duty.

"This is a lonely world," said Joe, as he turned down the footpath, "and a hard world, when we cannot pay our rent; but grandmother says, 'if we trust in God he will not forsake us,' and I *know* where she learned *that*." After a while he met a man named Brown, who kept a shop in the neighbourhood, and he, knowing Joe to be a lad who had a *good name*, engaged him as a messenger. This was something to be thankful for.

Joe came home to his master, looking at first rather shy in his presence, and when the remark was made, "I'm sorry it has gone so hard with the old woman," he coloured painfully. "Come, come," said Mr. Brown, "cheer up, we need only be ashamed of poverty when bad conduct brings us low: I was reared at a parish school myself; and owe much to the kind master and mistress; I was also instructed by the clergyman of the place, not only in the *letter*, but in the *spirit* of the gospel—*do you understand?*"—"My grandmother does, sir," said Joe simply. His master now dismissed him to the kitchen, where he found the cook ready to provide for him.

Joe was up early next morning, and busy to assist the good dame at her work; when she was ready for her cup of tea, he set her a chair, and put down a saucer of milk on the ground for miss puss;—but no, her ladyship leaped upon the table; she had been the cook's chief companion hitherto, and so took airs on herself. Soon a gentle voice called "Joe, come here."—"That is the mistress," said the cook, and Joe tripped off almost as happy as his master had been at the parish school.

The good-natured shopkeeper had no cause to regret his endeavour to help an industrious person: Joe acquired a good name in the neighbourhood as a correct messenger; he had often to receive cash on the delivery of parcels, and showed, in giving receipts, that he could write a neat hand.

One evening Mr. Brown had a visit from the near-sighted gentleman, as he was called, who was about to return to the city, a journey of some miles. "Brown," said he, "I wish you could find out for me an *honest lad*, as I see you have got one yourself. Did he tell you how

I gave him by mistake, yesterday, a small gold piece amongst the change, and how he brought it back to me, immediately on discovery: it was not the act alone that pleased me; there was a simplicity and uprightness in the manner, which convinced me he is not an 'eye-servant.'"

Mr. Brown mentioned Joe's earnestness to pay his small sum of rent, and his strong wish to bring his grandmother home once more to live with him. "I would," added he, "part with him for his advancement, even at an inconvenience. I knew you could give him full employment in your warehouse, with profit to himself at the same time."

What a crowd and bustle is here—people hastening (carpet bag in hand) to the railroad; and see, we have our young friend Joe, following his new master: his eyes are red, and his expression sorrowful, so that it is plain he does not relish parting better than most other affectionate persons; however, Mrs. Brown promises faithfully to look after his grandmother.

The rapid movement of the train soon brought the travellers to their place of destination, and they quickly scattered for business or for pleasure. Joe was jostled by umbrellas on every side, and his thoughts went back to the quiet shelter of the trees, and the sight of potatoe fields, so much more pleasing than the busy streets. Glad was he to arrive at his master's door, when out came little Arthur and tall Henry to meet papa, and their mamma followed smiling and greeting.

Before long, Joe went by the name of *half sovereign* with the boys, and when he laughed they thought it a good joke. "Boys," said their father one day, "it is hard the poor fellow should have the 'same without the gain,' as people say: suppose you were to contribute to the payment of his small debt, by laying apart every week, a trifle, till it comes to ten shillings—better, you will acknowledge, to try and do good, than spend your pocket-money, as boys are too apt, on unprofitable things." The boys took their father's wise hint; they made a box with a slit in the top, and every Saturday each dropped in a sixpence; when the sum reached ten shillings, they were well-rewarded by the gratitude their kind and unexpected gift inspired.

Days bustled past in the midst of business, and then came sound sleep. Joe often dreamed of his grandmother, and on waking, pursued the fond fancy of bringing her home—rich enough to maintain her. But after awhile came a sad damp to this happy idea. Mr. Brown arrived and brought the mournful news, that poor granny was dangerously ill, on which his considerate master did not prevent Joe setting off with Mr. Brown to see her.

Mrs. Brown met the poor boy with a face so grave, that he felt he had lost his aged and loved relative; but his troubled spirit was in some measure comforted, on being told the peace in which she departed, and how warmly she had blessed him, and prayed for him. "Yes," said Mrs. Brown, "many, surrounded with all the world can give, might have envied her in her last hour; she has left her *good name* behind her, and I have reason to think, has induced many to turn from evil habits: truly, she teaches us, 'God is no respecter' of rank, but makes his Word our only true happiness under all circumstances."

As soon as Joe was able to turn his thoughts to any subject but that of his recent sorrow, he made his way to his former landlord, and "paid him all." It was pleasing to find this man becoming more patient with the honest and industrious; though he had not yet established a *good name*, he was in a fair way of doing so. Joe returned to his master for a few years, after which he permanently fixed in his own neighbourhood. He never lost an opportunity of doing a *good turn* for his faithful friend Mr. Brown; nor did he forget to send a present of his finest potatoes, from time to time, to his last employer. In his choice of a wife, he has had regard to her *good name*, for discretion and sweet temper. Ever under the guidance of the Word of God, he is ready to acknowledge, that "*a good name is better than great riches.*"

A. B.

STANZA.

Ab, yes, little child! 'tis a world of delight;
How lovely the flowers—and the spring-time how bright!
Fresh and green are the fields, and the leaves on the tress
Are gracefully bending to meet the soft breeze.

The mountain is crown'd with the dark purple heath;
 The valley is spread in luxuriance beneath;
 The gay tripping milkmaid enjoys, as she goes,
 The sweet-scented eglantine, twined with the rose.

Ab, yes, little child! all is fair to the eye,
 But soon we perceive coming clouds in the sky;
 The seasons pass quickly—and winter, at hand,
 Is spreading his gloom o'er the late smiling land.

It is thus, little child, in the mirth of the heart,
 Happy childhood and youth, in succession, depart;
 If so fleet be the period of earth-giving pleasure,
 Let us lay up, securely, a far richer treasure!

A. B.

REVIEW.

A Commentary on the Four Gospels. By the Rev. A. A. LIVERMORE, Keene, New Hampshire. *Reprinted from the Boston Edition.* Belfast, 1844. Pp. 603, 12mo.

WE hail with much satisfaction this commentary on the Gospels. The want of such a work in our denomination has been long felt; and although it may be expected that there will be a great diversity of opinion as to the correctness of the author's exposition of various passages of Scripture, yet as a whole, we are sure it will be welcomed as a most valuable addition to our popular theological literature. The liberal principles on which the Unitarian church is based, leads to a considerable diversity of opinion among its members: and therefore, no commentary could be compiled that would meet the expectations, and embody the sentiments of all. But the spirit of the work before us, its happy exposition of many difficult passages, and the variety of practical lessons which it enforces, will render it an acceptable and useful companion to all, in the study of the four gospels.

This work is rather popular than critical; and so much the better for the general reader, and especially for the Sunday-school teacher, for whose benefit its re-publication was chiefly designed by the Northern Sunday-school Association. We are glad to find that this Association, in addition to the ordinary stock of books for the Sabbath school, have been enabled to publish such an aid to the

teacher, and that their selection of a commentary has been approved by several ministers in this country, in whom they have confidence; as well as by that portion of the press which may be regarded as the organ of our denomination.

We perceive by the last number of the Boston *Christian Examiner*, that the Commentary on the gospels, and that on the Acts of the Apostles lately published, are to be followed by an exposition of the remaining books of the New Testament, by the same author. And we hope that we shall have in due time, a re-publication of these also, at such a price as will secure them a large circulation in these countries.

INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICAN SLAVERY.—REPLY OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN MINISTERS TO THE ADDRESS ON SLAVERY.

IN reply to the address forwarded early in the present year, from a large number of Unitarian ministers in Great Britain and Ireland to their American brethren, and of which the principal portion will be found in page 33 of this volume of the *Bible Christian*, the following reply has been received. It is right to add, that it is accompanied by a letter to Dr. Hutton, to whom it was sent, satisfactorily explaining the delay which arose in forwarding it.

“To the Unitarian Ministers of Great Britain and Ireland, who signed an Address to ‘their Ministerial Brethren of the Unitarian Churches in the United States of North America,’ dated December 1, 1843.

“REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,—We have received your letter relating to Slavery, a subject of deep and fearful interest to us all. In our political relations, it is threatening to upheave the very foundations of our government, while it draws its dark line through the land, and painfully divides the members of a great, and, otherwise, united people, on a point touching the dearest interests of man. In its moral and religious bearings, we cannot look upon it without feeling sick at heart. It is a curse pressing every year more heavily upon society; and as we believe in the righteous retributions of heaven, so we verily believe that, unless we do all that we can to purge it away, it must bring upon us the sorest calamities that, in the providence of God, can fall upon a nation. So far, there is no difference of feeling or opinion among us. We all believe that there is something for us to do. But what shall we do? How shall we act? Slavery, though it belongs only to a portion of our country, is so woven into our politi-

cal organization and, in its more extended influences and relations, has such bearings, that the question is one not only of solemn interest, but of great difficulty, requiring of us the most earnest and devout thought. And as we must answer to a higher tribunal than that of man, so must we be faithful, each to his own convictions.

"As it respects any direct political action for the abolition of slavery, except in the district of Columbia, and in the territories not yet admitted as independent States, it may not be known to you that the citizens of the Free States have no more right to interfere than the citizens of Great Britain. As a political body, each separate State has the entire control of this matter within itself, and is exceedingly jealous of any interference from without.

"In addition, therefore, to what we can do for a correct public sentiment in the Free States, our only appeal is to the consciences and hearts of our brethren, whose misfortune it has been to inherit, whose guilt it will be, if, without strong and earnest struggles, they consent to uphold, an institution, which, from the dreadful wrong it inflicts on master and slave, must be unblessed of God, and a curse to man.

"We ask for ourselves, and we ask for them, the counsel and sympathy of all Christian men; and we trust that the wise and holy efforts of all will second our efforts and our prayers; that slavery may no longer stain our national character, and threaten the ruin of our republic. Our faith is strong; and while we see cause for penitence and sorrowful forebodings, we have also a bright assurance that if we are true, He who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, will, in his own good time, point out to us a way of deliverance.

"With sincere regard, your brethren in the faith and hopes of the gospel of Christ.

"May 15th, 1844."

[Here follow the signatures of 130 ministers.]

As a farther expression of the feelings of our American brethren on this important subject, we deem it right to subjoin the following resolutions, passed at an adjournment of the last annual meeting of the American Unitarian Association, May 29th:—

Resolved,—That in the consideration of this subject, we recognize the obligation devolving upon us as a Christian Association, to proceed upon Christian principles, and in a Christian spirit; and to make it our single object to "speak the truth in love."

Resolved,—That, viewing the institution of Slavery in the light of Christianity, we cannot fail to perceive, that it conflicts with the natural rights of human beings, as the equal children of a common Father; and that it subverts the fundamental principle of Christian brotherhood.

Resolved,—That in the necessary effects of Slavery upon the personal and social condition, and upon the moral and religious character of all affected by it, we perceive an accumulation of evils,

over which Christianity must weep, against which Christianity should remonstrate, and for the removal of which, Christianity appeals to the hearts and consciences of all disciples of Jesus, to do what they can, by their prayers, by the indulgence and expression of their sympathy, and by the unremitting and undisguised exertion of whatever moral and religious influence they may possess.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL CELEBRATION, EAST BRIDGEWATER, U.S.

A Sunday-school anniversary celebration of the children belonging to the Rev. Mr. Whitman's society, in East Bridgewater, took place on Tuesday, Sept. 10th. The pupils, with their teachers, parents, pastor, and friends, assembled at the church at one o'clock, p. m. where they were addressed by the Rev. Mr. Waterston, of Boston. His language was most suitably adapted to their juvenile capacities; his illustrations were familiar, easily understood, appropriate, and beautiful. While he reasoned on the surrounding beauties of the blooming and living earth, and the glories of the heavens above, alluding also to the music of the gentle breezes, and the songs of the feathered tribes, and led the tender thoughts "from nature up to nature's God," powerfully enforcing the principles of love and gratitude to the great Giver of all rational enjoyment—every eye was fixed upon the speaker, and sparkled with delight; every ear, too, was intent, to catch the smallest lisp of utterance. His occasional anecdotes were so well suited to their little minds, that they could at once see their adaptation, exhibiting in their countenances the highest degree of satisfaction. To the teachers he made a most strenuous and urgent appeal; enjoining upon them, in strong and forcible language, to suffer no neglect of duty, but to be faithful to their tender and interesting charge; to be faithful to themselves, and, what was eminently their duty, and certainly must be a pleasure, to be faithful to their pastor. To them would he look at all times with confidence and with reliance, as his helpers and special friends, in his mighty responsibilities. Amidst his labours, cares, and anxieties, their friendship, their kindness and ready attention would do much to cheer his spirits, and render essential relief; softening many a pang, and lightening many a burden. The parents were by no means passed over by the powerful and pathetic speaker. Here were their little ones, an angel throng, assembled for innocent regalement, and about to move on together to the festal grove, the tabernacle and temple of nature, with walls of the forest pine, and the heavens for its canopy! Can it be that their parents are uninterested? O, of what avail are the labours of the teacher, and the prayers, and addresses, and the visits of the minister, when the parent seems to care for none of these things? This old, time-worn, and weather-beaten church, how venerable its appearance! We are awe-struck! We love to look round upon its deep galleries, and massy beams, and are led to say, "Sure, 'tis none other than the gate of Heaven."

Here we remember to have seen worshipping, many a grey-headed father, who has now gone down to the silent tomb; and here, too, year after year, have these hallowed walls re-echoed with the high praises of Jehovah! What need of temples of granite, and pulpits of marble? Here the soul can be elevated in the purest devotion; and we may well say, "lo, God is here!" Weekly we come up hither with our families and our little ones, and engage in the solemnities of worship. But some have said, and perhaps there are those here who will say, that prayer and devotion are not necessary; and, of course, they live in constant neglect of the same. What! prayer and religion not necessary, when crime is so prevalent? No need of prayer for deliverance from temptation in such an age as this? No need of religion and prayer for the safety of your little ones, when the spoiler is abroad; when deception is practising its thousand tricks, and the vile incendiary is firing your buildings; when guilt stalks at noonday, and mischief is on your right and on your left? O, my friends, parents of these dear ones, on whose behalf we are assembled, I wish I could fully impress you with a sense of the importance of religiously educating your children. Fail not to assemble round the family altar in daily devotion; and there, in your own plain unlaboured style of language, ask forgiveness of your sins, and give thanks to God for mercies received. O, my whole heart is engaged in this cause, that your offspring may be reared up fit for Heaven and eternity. I feel more than I can utter; and must close with the hope, that my visit may be the means of the most happy and heavenly results.

LONDON DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of this Society was held on Wednesday, October 30th, at the Mission Chapel, Half-Moon-alley, Lower Whitecross-street. The meeting was most numerously attended, by a highly respectable company, and in the course of the evening the room was inconveniently crowded. The gallery was filled by a party of children belonging to the Sunday-school, and their neat appearance, orderly conduct, and the pleasing manner in which they sang several pieces of music, bore testimony to the good which the institution is conferring on them. After tea, Dr. Drennan's hymn was sung, commencing—

"Oh! sweeter than the fragrant flow-
At evening's dewy close,
The will, united, with the power,
To succour human woes."

Thomas Hornby, Esq. was then called to the chair; and after some introductory remarks, stated that although the reasons for instituting societies like the London Domestic Mission Society, were too obvious to require laboured exposition, he could not give those reasons in more convincing language than had been done, by

Dr. Channing, who truly observed—"That those classes of society which enjoy fewest advantages of education, peculiarly need instruction and the voice of the living teacher; that those whose habits, conditions, and wants, exclude them, in effect, from our churches, should be visited in their homes by the ministers of Christianity, who does not see and acknowledge? If we, with every means of culture, need the Christian ministry, the poor need it more. Is it not a duty, and should we not rejoice, to send forth faithful, enlightened men, whose office shall be, to strengthen those whom corrupt influences are sweeping from duty with peculiar power; to guide those who have no other counsellor, to admonish and cheer those who are pressed with heaviest temptations; to awaken the minds of those who are almost unconscious of their intellectual powers; to breathe fortitude into those who suffer most; to open a better world to those to whom this world is darkened; and above all to snatch their children from ruin, to protect the young who seem born to a heritage of want or crime? The ministry devoted to these offices is undeniably a wise, Christian, noble institution. This evening you are called to contribute to its support. Do so cheerfully. You are not called to uphold a plan of doubtful charity, or to send teachers to remote regions, where years of anxious labour must be spent on an unbroken, unthankful soil, before the fruit can appear. You are invited to sustain an institution, seated in the heart of our city, and which, as you know, is sending the waters of life through our own population. Its chapels, Sunday Schools, libraries, are in the midst of you. The doors, to which its ministers carry counsel and consolation, are near your own. You see its influences this moment in these children. Its aim is, to remove the saddest features of our civilization, the deep corruption of great cities; and in the energy which it now puts forth, we have a pledge of a happier era, in which society will prosper without the terrible sacrifice of so many of its members. May this good work go on and spread, and may future generations bless us for saving them from some of the worst evils which darken our own age." After this appropriate quotation, the chairman proceeded—Can *we*, my friends, be more usefully, or more gratefully employed, than in furthering objects like these? in so doing, shall we not be following the example of our great Master? shall we not be attending to his bidding? It is not, however, at meetings like the present only, that we are to be mindful of these duties; we should make them the business of our lives, for we must ever remember that we are not placed here to flatter our own vanity—to gratify our own passions, and to toil for our own advancement, but rather to seek for opportunities to benefit our fellow-man in common with ourselves. What are riches, even if gathered together without the sacrifice of honour and honesty—rank and station, even if attained without sycophancy and unseemly submission—unless accompanied with the consciousness of ever having held out the right hand of fellowship to our less fortunate brother, and done all in our power to alleviate his distress and improve his condition? We shall indeed stand alone, and feel

alone, if, upon a review of our lives, we shall find that important personage, self, has been the sole object of our care. Institutions like the one, the success of which we are met this night to promote, call the best feelings of our nature into action; and I trust that not only now, but at all times, all present will do their duty. After accounting for the absence of the treasurer from indisposition, and giving a brief outline of the pecuniary affairs of the Society, the Chairman called upon the missionaries to give some account of their respective mission stations.

Rev. W. Vidler was received with acclamation. He said, it was difficult to know where to commence, but he would begin with the schools. They had a day school, the average attendance of which was 120. The Sunday-school attendance was about 140, the numbers on the books being more than 200. They had outgrown their means of accommodation, and with improved premises could extend their usefulness. On week evenings they had children's and adult classes. On Sunday morning the room was employed for a religious service to the children, and in the evening they had a service for adults, the latter often to the full extent of their accommodation. But this was not the main object of their mission; it was the carrying peace and comfort to the homes of the poor and destitute. Mr. Vidler then proceeded to detail some affecting cases of dire suffering among the poor, which he had met with in the course of his visits, and spoke of the kindness of the poor to each other. The great difficulty was to know how to help the poor permanently. He rejoiced that he had in some cases succeeded. Sometimes they were quite broken down, and without hope, but he knew that in such cases many received hope and comfort, and were enabled to see their way through their difficulties. He had been much helped on by their funds, and he could assure them that the poor were grateful, and recognised the good that had been done them and their little ones.

The Rev. R. K. Philp said he always felt it a difficulty to speak about himself, for a man was tempted, sometimes to say either too much or perhaps too little. He was happy to find that the time was gone by when it was necessary to argue that the poor had claims on their sympathy. It was now acknowledged; and, also, that they should receive aid and instruction. Education and employment were, in his view, the two great means of elevating the poor. Funds should however be provided, and suitable agents should be found for this purpose. The institution at Spicer-street, over which he was placed, was nearly in all respects the same as at Half-Moon Alley; they had a day school, in which were from 110 to 120 children, and a Sunday school. At one time they had a school containing more than 300 children. The reason why it had fallen off was, that there were many new schools established which did not then exist. They were happy to see this, for they cared not who did the work, provided it was done. While he rejoiced in the zeal thus manifested, he was sorry men did not do good in a more Christian temper. There was a great deal of gross misrepresentation about them, and he was still more sorry to add

that ladies said the bitterest things against them. He often felt discouraged, but when he saw the good that was accomplished he took courage. He concluded with a suggestion, that the ladies would, on going home, turn over their wardrobes, to see if they could not spare something for the poor.

The meeting was afterwards addressed by R. Taylor and R. Surridge, Esq. Revs. Dr. Hutton, P. Cannon, G. Kenrick, J. Macdonald, J. Short; Dr. Bateman, and Mr. Cochran.

BIRMINGHAM UNITARIAN DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY.—

CLOSING OF THE OLD AND OPENING OF THE NEW CHAPEL.

The last religious services in the old chapel of the above institution will long be remembered by the worshippers in that place. The adult portion of the morning congregation has been continually on the increase, and on the occasion referred to (Sunday, Oct. 13) the chapel was crowded to excess.

After an interesting service, conducted by the Rev. Thomas Bowring, and addressed chiefly to the Sunday-school pupils, the usual quarterly administration of the Lord's Supper took place, under circumstances even more than commonly interesting and attractive; it was, indeed, the "last supper" in that lowly house of prayer, endeared alike to pastor and flock by so many pleasing remembrances. The scene was deeply affecting; there were about sixty communicants, many of whom were much moved, and all evinced the most devout feeling and attentive demeanour as worshippers of the Father "in spirit and in truth."

In the evening, Mr. Bowring delivered an impressive and instructive discourse, in which he reviewed the interesting proceedings of his ministry to the poor, and the various operations of the mission; while the silent tear which stole down the cheeks of many of his hearers, bespoke the deep emotion of their hearts on meeting for the last time in the old place "where prayer was wont to be made," and where so many hallowed associations had bound them together as a Christian congregation; nor could the anticipation of the superior accommodation and advantages of the new chapel and school-rooms, or the prospect of increased benefit to be derived therefrom, obliterate, entirely, all feeling of regret on leaving the homely tabernacle where they had so long enjoyed the privilege of social worship, and their children the advantage of religious instruction. The proceedings of this little meeting were listened to with the most intense interest by all present, and will be long held in remembrance.

On Friday, October 18th, the new chapel in Hurst-street was opened for public worship, on which occasion the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, of Leeds, delivered a beautifully appropriate and very able discourse, founded on the words of the Saviour, contained in parts of 21st and 23d verses of the 14th chapter of Luke's gospel,—
"Go ye out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring hither the maimed, and the halt, and the blind; and compel

them to come in, that my house may be filled." Mr. Wicksteed took occasion to review the conduct of the Christian Church, with regard to the accommodation afforded to the poor, and contended, that their claims had been overlooked, especially since the reformation by Protestants, who had built churches for the *rich* in the better parts of the cities and towns; while, until lately, in the more densely populated districts, the *poor* had been left unprovided for. Mr. W. then dwelt on the duty and necessity of seeking out those who would not come to the house of God unsought for, and by erecting suitable places of worship in convenient districts, and by exerting the elevating influences of Domestic missions, induce, or in the language of the text, "compel them to come in," and concluded his discourse, which was listened to with the most profound attention, and which evidently made a deep impression on all present, with a dedicatory prayer of extraordinary power and beauty. On Sunday evening Mr. Wicksteed again occupied the pulpit, and delivered an excellent discourse on behalf of the Day and Sunday-school Fund, and towards fitting up the new school-rooms. The chapel and vestry (the front of the latter being so arranged as to be thrown open) were filled to overflowing, every spot were even a child could sit or stand being occupied, while hundreds went away, unable to gain admittance; great numbers of the friends of the mission standing the whole of the evening. It was most animating and delightful to see the rich and the poor thus massed and mingled together, and joining, heart and voice, in the worship of that God who is the maker of them all, "who is no respecter of persons, who regardeth not the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands." There could not have been fewer than 600 persons crammed into a space calculated to seat comfortably only 450. The collection amounted to £26 12s. 3½d. making, at the two services, a total of £71 7s. 9½d.

On Monday evening, October 21, a very numerous meeting of friends of the mission and members of the congregation took place, in the large school-room under the Newhall-hill chapel, the use of which was kindly granted for the purpose, when about 400 happy individuals partook of "the cup which cheers but not inebriates." Thomas Eyre Lee, Esq. president of the society, was called to the chair, and briefly addressed the meeting, congratulating the friends of the mission on the completion and opening of the new chapel, and expressed the pleasure he felt, in common with every person present, on seeing their esteemed friend Mr. Wicksteed, who, in 1841, preached their first anniversary sermon, once more present among them. The Rev. H. Hutton then addressed the meeting in an animated strain, and concluded by moving the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. C. M. Evans:—"That the cordial thanks of the meeting be presented to the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, of Leeds, for the very able and excellent discourses delivered by him on Friday and Sunday last, and for the interest he has ever manifested in the welfare of this society; and that this meeting desires to offer to Mr. Wicksteed its sincere congratulations, on the establishment of a domestic mission con-

nected with the Leeds Unitarian congregation, and to express its earnest wishes for the prosperity and usefulness of that institution." The Rev. Charles Wicksteed replied in an energetic and most effective speech, and expressed the gratification he experienced in again meeting his Birmingham friends, and in having once more had the privilege of advocating the claims of their most excellent institution, the "Mission to the poor." He then gave an animated account of the "rise and progress" of the domestic mission connected with his own congregation, which, since his last visit to Birmingham, had been established, and which was now in operation, with every prospect of extensive usefulness; they had engaged a missionary, who in the spirit of Christian benevolence, had long laboured to promote the intellectual improvement and moral elevation of the people, and he felt assured that his labours as a minister to the poor would be blessed with success. Mr. W. concluded a powerful speech by declaring, that it was to the example of Birmingham, and to the successful operations of that institution, that they in Leeds were mainly indebted for the establishment of their domestic mission. The meeting was afterwards addressed by various speakers, and a vote of thanks having been passed to the Chairman, the animated and spirit-stirring scene was brought to a close, after an evening spent in the utmost harmony and good feeling.

The chapel is a neat brick building of simple gothic architecture, with porch in front, and approached from the street by a flight of twelve steps, by which arrangement, and in consequence of the natural slope of the ground to the back, spacious and well lighted school-rooms are provided underneath. The interior of the chapel, like the exterior, is neat and simple, and in excellent keeping. At the end, to the right of the entrance, is the pulpit, a very neat structure, adorned with beautiful crimson velvet drapery, cushion, &c. presented by the teachers in the Sunday Schools, and on which rests the elegantly-bound Bible, the grateful offering of the congregation, proclaiming the kindred feeling and Christian unity which happily exist between pastor and flock, between the friends of the Mission and those for whose use and benefit the chapel has been erected. Opposite the pulpit is a gallery, capable of holding nearly 200 children, and opposite the entrance is the vestry, with moveable front, affording extra accommodation for 30 or 40 persons, with the advantage of hearing, and for the most part, of seeing the minister. The chapel is lofty and well ventilated, and without pews, the whole space being fitted with comfortable and substantial forms. It is, we believe, the only chapel in Birmingham entirely free.

MARTYRDOM OF SERVETUS.—SERMONS BY DR. DRUMMOND.

On Sundays, October 27th, and November 3rd, two sermons were preached in the Presbyterian church, Strand-street, Dublin, by the Rev. W. H. Drummond, D. D. on the Life, Times, and Martyrdom of Servetus.

In the first, on October 27th, being the anniversary of his martyrdom in 1553, Dr. Drummond briefly glanced at the state of

religion from the commencement of Christianity till the birth of Servetus; the introduction of one error after another into the church; first, the worship of Christ, the Deity of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the Authority of Councils, Popes; and the climax, the worship and adoration of saints, the particular worship of the Virgin Mary, and her exaltation to almost Deity itself. The worship of images, pictures, pilgrimages, the supreme power of the clergy in a temporal as well as a spiritual manner, called loudly for a reformation, the characters of the Reformers, and the progress of the Reformation. Servetus, a medical as well as a religious reformer; his writings; disputes with Calvin; the means used by Calvin for his destruction; his getting him put into the power of the Inquisition; Servetus's escape; his capture by the emissaries of Calvin at Geneva; his trial before the Senate; his answers to Calvin. And on Sunday, November 3rd, Dr. Drummond resumed the subject: the part taken by the other Reformers in the trial of Servetus; the right which Servetus had, that which was also claimed by the other reformers (*viz.* the Bible, the sole ground of belief, and the right of private judgment in matters of truth), the incompetence of the Genevese to try Servetus, he being a citizen of Spain, and only travelling through their country; his last trial and sentence; his fortitude, and Christian forgiveness to Calvin, who was the means of his death; his execution, sufferings, and last words. He then glanced at what Geneva was, and what it is now; the ultimate triumph of Unitarianism there, where Calvin lived and died. The character of Calvinism, its persecuting spirit illustrated by the Westminster Confession. The modern Calvinists, when they could not both rob and martyr Unitarians, chose the former; the latter, the wise legislature of this country having put it out of their power to do. He alluded to the progress of liberal religious opinions exemplified by the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. He called loudly on Unitarians to do all in their power to extend Unitarianism; as that and Christianity were at least to him synonymous terms; and lastly showed that all persecution was against the spirit of Christ, who brought in, not a law of vengeance, but one of perfect love.

The church was on both occasions crowded by a deeply attentive congregation.

TEA PARTY AT RAKLIFF, NEAR MANCHESTER.

On Monday, Nov. 11th, a tea party and public meeting were held at Rakliff, near Manchester, in order to make a collection towards the Mathew Fund. Notwithstanding the extremely inclement state of the weather, about 140 persons sat down to tea; and at the evening meeting, the hall of the Mechanics' Institution (which had been kindly granted for the occasion), was crowded. There were ten ministers and lay preachers present. The chair was taken by the Rev. R. T. Miniss, of Stand. The Rev. E. Robinson, Independent minister of Park chapel, moved, and P. P. Carpenter seconded, a resolution, expressive of gratitude for the success of the reform in Ireland. The Rev. W. B. Flower, B.A.

curate of Knutsford, in an eloquent address, characterised by liberal feeling and sympathy with the labouring classes, and with our Roman Catholic brethren, moved—"That, considering the immense boon conferred by the 'Apostle of Temperance,' not only on his native country, but on England and on the world; the noble devotement of his time, his strength, his fortune, his all, to the great work in which God has so signally blessed his labours; and the humility and singleness of purpose with which he has ever prosecuted his great design; considering also the pecuniary embarrassments to which he has subjected himself, and the need of additional supplies to carry on the noble cause of temperance reform,—this meeting feels called upon by gratitude to raise contributions towards the fund for assisting the Rev. T. Mathew in his present difficulties." This was seconded by the Rev. F. Howorth, of Bury, who paid a beautiful tribute to the character of this truly great man.

SOIREES AT DUNMURRY AND GLENARM.

DUNMURRY.—A Soiree was held at Dunmurry, on the evening of Oct. 2, in commemoration of the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. The rooms were tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowers. About four hundred persons were expected; but so general was the desire to testify respect for the minister and congregation of Dunmurry, as well as to express satisfaction at the success of the Dissenters' Bill, that there were probably seven or eight hundred individuals in attendance—many of them from a great distance—including members of the Roman Catholic and Established Churches, Calvinistic Presbyterians, members of the Society of Friends, and Methodists:—John Roberts, Esq, Colin, presided. Prayer was offered up by the Rev. J. Carley, of Antrim; after the usual expressions of loyalty, sentiments were given, embodying Civil and Religious Liberty; thanks to Sir Robert Peel, and Her Majesty's Ministers; to the various members of both Houses of Parliament that supported the Bill,—to that portion of the public press which advocated it, especially to the *Northern Whig*; the liberal members of other churches that had petitioned in its favour. Interesting addresses were delivered in the course of the evening, by Revds. Dr. Montgomery, Dr. Keenan, J. Carley, F. Blakely, B. Dorrian, G. Hill, R. Campbell, J. Hall, and by D. Munce; F. D. Finlay, Esq and the Chairman.

GLENARM.—On Tuesday, Oct. 22, the Remonstrant congregation of Glenarm held a soiree, in their meeting-house, for the purpose of expressing their gratitude to their friends, of other religious denominations, who came forward so kindly to get up, and sign petitions on their behalf, during the progress of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. This must have been a pleasing duty to every member of the congregation; for in no other locality did the members of other religious communities manifest a greater interest in the success of their Remonstrant brethren, than in that of Glenarm. The meeting was numerous and respectable. After

tea, on the motion of the Rev. A. Montgomery, seconded by the Rev. T. Smyth, George S. Halloran, Esq. was called to the chair. Several sentiments, of a routine character, having been gone over, the Chairman gave,—“Sir Robert Peel, and her Majesty’s Ministers;” “Civil and Religious Liberty;” “Our Deputation to London in defence of our rights;” “Our Friends of other religious denominations, who aided us so liberally in the hour of danger;” “The Rev. A. Montgomery, the old and faithful minister of the congregation of Glenarm;” “The Rev Thomas Smyth, and the congregation of Glenarm;” “The Ladies;” and “*The Northern Whig.*” The Rev. Messrs. Campbell, Glendy, Montgomery, Smyth, and H. Martin, Esq. spoke on the occasion.

FATHER MATHEW.

We are glad to perceive that the appeal lately made by the friends of Father Mathew and Total Abstinence, is likely to be well responded to. Influential meetings have been held in various places; and already large contributions have been given. It might be difficult, on the score of prudence, to justify the expenditure which has led to this good man’s embarrassments; but we know, that, in carrying out a work of righteousness and mercy, he has involved himself in pecuniary difficulties; and we are sure, that the gratitude of Ireland, and the generosity of the sister kingdom will be evinced, in completely releasing him from his embarrassments, and enabling him to go on in the noble work to which his fortune and his talents have been so successfully devoted.

The following extract from a letter from the Apostle of Temperance to a friend in England will be read with interest:—

“The letter you received from me was written in the fulness of a heart writhing under unmerited obloquy, and pouring out its thankfulness for the truly Christian vindication of my conduct and motives.

“In a calmer moment, I should not have spoken so unreservedly of my embarrassments. I always concealed them,—dreading the cold pity of some, and the censure of others. I may have been too liberal and imprudent; but I was hurried away by enthusiasm in a glorious cause. I alone, and relations, the nearest and dearest, are the sufferers. The very accusation of making money by the Temperance movement stimulated me to prove, too profusely, my disinterestedness.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It is requested that all communications intended for insertion in the *Bible Christian*, will be forwarded not later than the 10th of the preceding month, addressed (if by post, prepaid) to the Rev. C. J. M’Alester, Holywood; or, otherwise, to 28, Rosemary-street, Bellast.

ERRATUM.—In the December No. of the present volume, pages 401—412 have been erroneously numbered 341—352.



